

A Regular Meeting of the City Council was held Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 7:05 PM in the Emergency Operations Center in the Police Headquarters located at 411 Midland Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026.

Mayor Richard Rigoglioso presided. City Clerk Andrew J. Pavlica announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act and under guidelines set forth by the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services in an email dated March 12, 2020 for the conduct of Council Meetings under a Health Emergency. City Clerk Pavlica announced that adequate notice was provided by mail, fax and email to the Official City newspapers and to other interested parties and by posting the meeting notice on the bulletin boards in City Hall and on the City Website. City Clerk Pavlica also announced that, although not required, a special public notice was also published in the April 25, 2020 edition of the Bergen Record newspaper advising of this meeting being held remotely, and the public was also directed to the City Website for guidance in order to listen and watch and participate. City Clerk Pavlica advised that these actions have been taken to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of Garfield due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Councilmembers Present: Richard Rigoglioso

Councilmembers Present Telephonically: Frank J. Calandriello and Joseph Delaney

Councilmembers Absent: Louis G. Aloia and Erin N. Delaney

Also Present: City Clerk Andrew J. Pavlica

Also Present Telephonically: City Manager Thomas J. Duch, City Attorney Robert Ferraro, Labor Counsel John Lavin, City Engineer Kevin J. Boswell, City Auditor Dieter Lerch and Interim Chief Financial Officer Roy Riggitano

2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

City Manager Duch explained the 2020 Municipal Budget.

COVID-19 VIRUS UPDATE

Mayor Rigoglioso read the following:

“Hello everyone. I pray that everyone is safe and healthy as we continue to battle this virus. As of today, Garfield has 687 residents who have contracted the Covid virus, and 36 residents have passed away due to the Covid Virus. Please continue to keep those families in your prayers and thoughts. Before I pass this onto our City Manager Tom Duch, just a few announcements I want to make: The federal government has authorized additional emergency economic relief for small businesses. Please visit the Small Business Administration (SBA) to learn more about the Paycheck Protection Program and other assistance options. Our city faces many challenges due to the current public health crisis. With residents practicing social distancing, it is important to develop creative ways to engage with our community. I would like to thank our Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, Good Neighbors, and Strangers Helping Strangers. Your community involvement to help those in need, and build resilience in our town, has not gone unnoticed. Many of these options, not only provide a service to those struggling, but also help those who are looking to volunteer and give back to their community. Finally, when we talk about heroes and residents who are putting themselves in harms way, helping out others, I would like to recognize and thank the Maschio Food Service Program and their employees for all their hard work. Maschio employees have taken on a big responsibility. They have been feeding our students and residents every day since the schools closed down. They have been cooking meals for our residents and seniors citizens, every day for free, averaging close to a 800 meals a day. Not only are they cooking the fresh food everyday, Maschio employees have been working the food lines handing the meals out everyday to our students and families that are struggling the most. This is just another service that our school and city have come together to do what is best for the residents.”

ARRIVAL OF COUNCILMEMBER ERIN DELANEY

At 7:15 PM, Councilmember Erin N. Delaney joined the meeting via telephonic methods and it was duly noted for the record.

COVID-19 VIRUS UPDATE

City Manager Duch said that testing was done behind City Hall for employees and the public, on April 16th, and he participated, and as a result of the test, he did test positive for the Coronavirus but was asymptomatic. He said that he removed himself from City Hall as instructed by the Manager of Communicable Diseases of Bergen County. He said that she advised him that he could return back to work this past week, Thursday, but suggested that he stay out until Monday. He said that he returned back to work on Monday, and did so after he obtained a letter from his Physician, pursuant to a policy that he, as the City Manager, instituted for City employees. He said that henceforth, from the Office of Emergency Management, the Governing Body will receive each Monday, an updated report of all the activities that have taken place until the Friday before. He said that the City continues to see a rise in positive cases and deaths impacting its residents. He said that this might be due to more testing sites becoming available for residents. He said that the City remains under a major disaster declaration: FEMA 4488-BR-NJ. He said that this order allows States, Counties and Municipalities to apply for Federal reimbursements for this event. He said that the City is tracking every expense. He said that the City remains under the State of New Jersey State of Emergency Order Declaration. He said that the State is currently up to Executive Order 127. He said that a complete copy of all of these orders is available for review through the City Office of Emergency Management. He said that the City also remains under the County of Bergen State of Emergency Order Declaration. He said that this order is also available for review through the City Office of Emergency Management. He said that all public and charter schools have been closed since March 16, 2020. He said that all City Buildings have been closed to public access as of March 17, 2020. He said that all City Parks, with the exception of Columbus Park, Twentieth Century Field, and the Historic Riverfront Park, have been closed to the public as of March 18, 2020. He said that these three parks are currently open for passive exercise, such as walking. He said that people have been asked to social distance. He said that other parks throughout the State have been shut down. He said that the City is trying to accommodate the people and allow them to walk, and walk separately, and distance themselves from each other, so the parks can remain open. He said that the Office of Emergency Management and he are tracking all Executive Order complaints received. He said that OEM and the Police Department are ensuring investigation and follow-up of each of those complaints. He said that they are also coordinating Best Practices created by the City Health Department to essential businesses, and informational sheets have been distributed to businesses throughout the town, so that they are aware of exactly what is happening.

He said that in terms of the Police Department, Police Officer Rebecca Schmidt, who is a New Jersey State Certified Paramedic, had been reassigned on March 12, 2020, to the Operations Division to assist with this Pandemic event. He said that PPE kits were distributed to all officers with policy and procedures to respond to Covid-19 emergencies. He said that the Emergency Service Unit officers were given refresher training on the wearing of Haz-Mat Suits/Respiratory Protection measures and responding to Covid-19 emergencies with additional protective measures. He said that ESU officers also trained in the disinfection process of vehicles and facilities, and that included employees in the DPW. He said that Sergeant Jeffrey Stewart was assigned to assist OEM with volunteer management within the Emergency Operations Center. He said that an online reporting system was implemented for residents to file certain police reports from computer, cell phone or tablet. He said that the Department contracted with CarFax to allow residents to obtain motor vehicle crash reports online. He said that Alternate Side Parking Rules were suspended on March 19, 2020, but Overnight Parking rules remain in effect. He said that the Police Headquarters at 160 Belmont Avenue has been closed to the public, but the Mobile Command Post was established outside of Headquarters, and is handling all walk up issues. He said that the system was instituted for residents to contact the Records Bureau via phone or email to request/receive reports. He said that Response and Dispatch polices have been implemented to handle Covid-19 calls for service. He said that policy on social distancing measures have been implemented. He said that Shift Roll Call has been suspended, and Officers have been told not to congregate, and personnel have been limited in Headquarters at any one time. He said that a Decontamination Policy has been

COVID-19 VIRUS UPDATE

implemented. He said that the Operations Division and/or Emergency Service Unit personnel have been disinfecting fleet vehicles daily and disinfecting Mobile Command Post and areas of buildings when occupied by prisoners or victims. He said that a Policy on mask wearing by all employees when in public, or on any call for service, has been implemented. He said that a Policy on Check-in Procedures and Reporting of Covid-19 symptoms has been implemented. He said that a Schedule Modification was implemented on April 1, 2020, at the direction of the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office to promote social distancing and allow officers longer periods of separation. He said that the Juvenile Bureau personnel have been assigned to security details at Board of Education Lunch, School Education Packets and Laptop Point of Distribution sites under the direction of Police Officer David Pikul under the Operations Division/OEM. He said that Patrols have been directed to open city parks and Officers making announcements to park occupants regarding social distancing measures.

He said that the Office of Emergency Management continues to staff the Emergency Operations Center daily. He said that the EOC is responsible for working with the Public Health Nurse, tracking cases daily, contacting all positive cases as per New Jersey Department of Health guidelines, documenting all resident positive cases within the city. He said that initial meetings have been coordinated with Department Heads and other City Officials to prepare and respond to the Covid-19 virus. He said that meetings have been coordinated with the Fire Chiefs on response policies and PPE policies to protect Fire Department members responding to emergencies during the Covid-19 event. He said that OEM is working with the Health Department and all city Department Heads to track all city employees testing positive or close contacts. He said that they have been establishing and providing guidance to protect those employees and their families during quarantine, daily follow up with employees on status of symptoms and providing employees and department heads with return to work dates. He said that the EOC Staff has been updating the Police CAD system and Mapping system daily with Covid-19 positive cases to ensure first responders are aware of these locations. He said that the EOC Staff references Health Department files to ensure that all entries are up to date. He said that the EOC Staff continues to work with the Public Health Nurse, tracking city cases, conducting telephone interviews and data entry into the State Health Computer System. He said that the EOC Staff has created a database to track all city Covid-19 cases and deaths for use by OEM and the Health Department. He said that the EOC Staff has been coordinating a disinfection process for any city building discovered to have an employee or volunteer who became positive with the Covid-19 virus. He said that the EOC Staff has been tracking all disinfection measures being employed daily by the Department of Public Works to ensure all city facilities are being disinfected daily for employee safety. He said that the EOC has been tracking usage of all disinfection and PPE used throughout the city to maintain sufficient supplies. He said that Daily Public information is being disseminated to residents through Nixle, Swift Reach and other social media platforms. He said that Management/Coordination of volunteer groups that are distributing food and supplies to residents in need is done at the Emergency Operations Center. He said that they are currently working with five groups who are working throughout the city. He said that Donation Management is being coordinated, stored and distributed at the EOC. He said that the Office of Emergency Management is coordinating the distribution of the County Meals on Wheels program for city residents due to the county's inability to complete this mission. He said that the Office of Emergency Management is coordinating Point of Distribution for the Board of Education's daily breakfast/lunch program, and the Board of Education's laptop and education packet program for students. He said that they have developed and delivered Employee Educational Policy and training program information for best practices to combat the Covid-19 virus. He said that they have developed and delivered a Daily Disinfection guideline for all city workers, their personal work space and vehicles to protect themselves from the Covid-19 virus. He said that they have developed and delivered a check-in policy for employees to check their temperatures when reporting to work and this guideline also includes direction for employees on who to report to, and how, if having symptoms of the Covid-19 virus. He said that they have coordinated city park closings with the City Administration and the Recreation Director. He said that they have coordinated material acquisition and messaging for social distancing measures signs to be installed in city parks. He said that they have coordinated distribution of Personal Protective equipment and disinfection products for all city departments, and have been tracking usage, providing replacements and purchasing additional items to replenish this

COVID-19 VIRUS UPDATE

equipment. He said that they have been researching new products for use to protect employees, such as sprayers/foggers, disinfectant and sterilization materials and other items needed for employee safety. He said that they have coordinated an Employee Testing site for city employees to receive the Covid-19 test. He said that they have completed a FEMA Request for Public Assistance Application for reimbursement of Emergency Protective Measures to the Covid-19 event. He said that the City Office of Emergency Management has assisted the Board of Education with completion of the Application process for their FEMA Request for Public Assistance program. He said that there is continual contact between the Bergen County Office of Emergency Management for updates on impacts to our city and region.

He said that the City Fire Department has implemented several policies regarding Department responses and protective measures for members of the Department. He said that they have implemented a policy limiting entrance into Fire Department facilities to vehicle maintenance and Fire Department responses. He said that the Fire Department has implemented a policy cancelling all training nights and in person meetings until further notice. He said that the Fire Department has responded to seventy-three calls for service since the first case of the Covid-19 virus on March 12, 2020.

He said that in regard to the City Emergency Medical Services, the City is contracted with Hackensack University Medical Center who have been exceptional throughout this event. He said that leadership from HUMC and MICCOM have been in constant contact with the Office of Emergency Management providing updates on their daily status, mutual aid usage and policy changes due to the Covid-19 virus. He said that since the onset of this virus, our EMS providers have responded to four hundred-seventy-five emergency calls.

He said that in terms of the Department of Public Works, they have been completing daily disinfection of the following buildings: City Hall, the Recreation Center, the Health Department Building, and both Police Headquarters at 160 Belmont Avenue and 411 Midland Avenue, and their own Department of Public Works Building at 413 Midland Avenue. He said that they have been disinfecting all DPW vehicles, installed Social Distancing signs in City Park and have delivered tents and barricades to Point of Distribution sites.

He said that the Health Department has managed Communicable Disease Investigations, Reporting and Surveillance for all Covid-19 positive cases within the city. He said that they file reports to the Mid Bergen Regional Health Commission, Bergen County Department of Health, New Jersey State Epidemiologist and Garfield OEM. He said that they have been coordinating contact tracing for all cases including index case interviews and education for Persons Under Investigation. He said that there was active daily monitoring until the City went over 100 cases. He said that the Health Department enters all interview data in the New Jersey Electronic Reporting and Surveillance System. He said that the Department manages outbreaks among Long Term Care facilities and coordinates with other jurisdictions identified to contact tracing. He said that the City Health Department is monitoring hospitalized cases through conference calls with Infection Prevention Specialists and entering that data. He said that the Department coordinates with OEM to track, report and document Garfield case count and fatalities. He said that they respond to residents questions and concerns, and every person who tests positives receives written materials from the City Health Department to guide them. He said that the Health Department has been following up and monitoring of all city employees regarding isolation, quarantine and return to work guidance after illness.

He said that he would be remiss if he did not thank Police Lieutenant Michael Marsh and Police Sergeant Claire Follari, because they are the City Emergency Management Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator. He said that he thanks the Police Department, Fire Department and Health Department, for all their great work throughout the situation. He said that they have attempted to keep the Governing Body as informed as possible. He said that regular updates will continue through Nixle, through Robo Calls, and through videos made by the Mayor or the City Manager. He asked the public to please practice social distancing and to wear their masks when they are out in public. He said that together, moving forward, listening to the Governor, listening to Health Officials, this pandemic can be overcome sooner, rather than later.

Regular Meeting April 28, 2020, Continued

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mayor Rigoglioso declared a Public Hearing on the 2020 Municipal Budget and asked if anyone had any objections.

There being none, Mayor Rigoglioso declared the Public Hearing closed.

ADOPTION OF THE 2020 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

See

the

following

pages numbered _____

for

Resolution No. 20-119

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 20-120

WHEREAS, Fire Company No. 5 has advised that they have accepted Brendan Carroll of 142 Plauderville Avenue, Garfield, New Jersey 07026, as a Regular Active Member, effective April 20, 2020,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Garfield, Bergen County, New Jersey that the action taken by Fire Company No. 5 to the above matter, is hereby approved.

On call of roll, Ayes 4,
Absent 1 - Councilmember Aloia

(Sgd) Erin N. Delaney
Joseph Delaney

Resolution No. 20-121

WHEREAS the Receiver of Sewer reports that she has received a request from the following property owner for a refund due to sewer over payment for the year 2020.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Garfield, that the proper offices are hereby authorized to issue a check refunding this over payment and forward same to the Receiver of Sewer for the purpose of noting her records and for mailing to the property owner.

SEWER ACCT #	OWNER	REASON	AMOUNT
4-12-54.01	Outwater Entrprises, Inc.	O/P Sewer	\$650.00

On call of roll, Ayes 4,
Absent 1 - Councilmember Aloia

(Sgd) Erin N. Delaney
Joseph Delaney

Resolution No. 20-122

WHEREAS the Receiver of Taxes reports that she has received a request from the following property owner for a Refund due to overpayment for the year 2020.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Garfield, that the proper offices are hereby authorized to issue a check refunding this overpayment and forward same to the Receiver of Taxes for the purpose of noting her records and for mailing to the property owner.

BLOCK	LOT	OWNER	REASON	AMOUNT
216.02	38	City of Garfield Taxes	O/P	\$1,894.00

On call of roll, Ayes 4,
Absent 1 - Councilmember Aloia

(Sgd) Erin N. Delaney
Joseph Delaney

Resolution No. 20-123

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXTENSION OF A LEASE FOR 160 BELMONT AVENUE, GARFIELD, NEW JERSEY

WHEREAS, the City of Garfield has been renting 160 Belmont Avenue and the lease is about to expire on April 30, 2020;

WHEREAS, the City wishes to extend the lease for the continued use of its Police Department;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on the 28th day of April 28, 2020, that the City Manager is hereby authorized to enter into a lease extension for six months with the option to terminate the said lease after three months by giving a one month notice, at the monthly rental of \$18,615.00 per month, with all other existing lease terms to remain in effect,

On call of roll, Ayes 3, Nays 1 -
Councilmember Erin N. Delaney,
Absent 1- Councilmember Aloia

(Sgd) Joseph Delaney
Richard Rigoglioso

Resolution No. 20-124

Resolution Extending the Tax Grace Period for Second Quarter 2020 Property Taxes

WHEREAS, by Executive Order No 130, Governor Philip D. Murphy has authorized municipalities to extend the grace period for the payment of second quarter 2020 property taxes; and

RESOLUTIONS

WHEREAS, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the State and Federal declarations of a major disaster throughout New Jersey, the governing body of the City of Garfield wishes to authorize this extension of the grace period for Garfield taxpayers;
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of the City of Garfield, in the County of Bergen, that the grace period for the payment of property taxes for the second quarter 2020 is hereby extended to June 1, 2020.

On call of roll, Ayes 4,
Absent 1 - Councilmember Aloia

(Sgd) Erin N. Delaney
Joseph Delaney

BILLS AND CLAIMS

Resolution No. 20-125

RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Garfield that the following bills covering the Current Fund Reserve totaling \$10,565.20 and the Current Fund totaling 173,256.21 and the Water Fund totaling 8,687.80 and the General Capital Fund totaling \$109,802.39 per the attached Computer List, be ordered paid and the proper officers are hereby authorized to issue check for same provided there are funds in the respective appropriations.

See

the

following pages numbered _____

for

Bills

and

Claims

ORDINANCES

Councilmember Erin Delaney introduced in writing the following ordinance entitled:

BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE 2020 ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN, BY AND FOR THE CITY OF GARFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$1,200,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS

City Clerk Pavlica read the ordinance by title.

Councilmember Erin Delaney moved that this ordinance entitled: “BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE 2020 ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN, BY AND FOR THE CITY OF GARFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$1,200,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS” do now pass on first reading and remain on file with the City Clerk for public inspection until public hearing thereon and further consideration thereof which shall be held May 12, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the new Police Station in Garfield and that the City Clerk be directed to publish said ordinance in full together with the notice of such hearing in The Record, at least seven days prior to the hearing.

The motion, duly seconded by Councilmember Joseph Delaney, was on roll call adopted by the following vote and the motion was declared adopted and said ordinance passed on first reading: Ayes 4, Absent 1 – Councilmember Aloia

Councilmember Erin Delaney introduced in writing the following ordinance entitled:

BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SYNTHETIC TURF ATHLETIC FIELD AT LAFASO FIELD IN, BY AND FOR THE CITY OF GARFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$510,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS

City Clerk Pavlica read the ordinance by title.

Councilmember Erin Delaney moved that this ordinance entitled: “BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SYNTHETIC TURF ATHLETIC FIELD AT LAFASO FIELD IN, BY AND FOR THE CITY OF GARFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$510,000 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS” do now pass on first reading and remain on file with the City Clerk for public inspection until public hearing thereon and further consideration thereof which shall be held May 12, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the new Police Station in Garfield and that the City Clerk be directed to publish said ordinance in full together with the notice of such hearing in The Record, at least seven days prior to the hearing.

The motion, duly seconded by Councilmember Joseph Delaney, was on roll call adopted by the following vote and the motion was declared adopted and said ordinance passed on first reading: Ayes 4, Absent 1 – Councilmember Aloia

Regular Meeting April 28, 2020, Continued

CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS

Mayor Rigoglioso read the following statements and questions that were received via email:

From: Elaine Giardino [<mailto:elaine.giardino@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 3:35PM
To: AndrewPavlica
Subject: City Council April 28 2020

Hi Andrew,

Thank you for taking my question/statement to the City Council.

Mayor & City Council of Garfield,

First thank you for doing the ROBO Calls updating us citizens on the status of Covid 19 cases and deaths in Garfield. These types of calls are important to keep us aware of what we need to do to stay safe. We are in a state of emergency, National, State and Local. Thank you for consider my suggestions from the last meeting. I'm sure others made similar suggestions. I've noticed that more information regarding how businesses and citizens are helping during the COVID 19 crisis has gotten out to citizens. You've added 3 hours to the Elmwood Park Cablevision Channel, we've gotten a few extra ROBO calls. Councilmen Aloia suggested calling neighbors to check in with them and perhaps call him at 3PM too.

Again please consider the following:

Focus Council and Administration efforts on getting more information out to everyone, by every means possible.

Re-activate the Garfield Cablevision line used by the BOE for all Cablevision citizens,
place more Robo calls,
include Website videos of activities in support of citizens during this pandemic,
Social Media, etc.

Let the Garfield citizens know how others are coping with the virus,
get permission to honor briefly those in Garfield who have lost their lives,
tell us who is helping citizens and how: food banks, local delivery workers, individual angels,
what kind of need does our community have: some are all alone in this crisis, some are fighting the virus at home, **what can be done to help** those without income or savings etc.

Now as weather gets better, how can the city help citizens not create another peak in COVID 19 cases?

Are there ideas for controlled activities that allow people to get out and still follow guidelines to stay healthy and safe?

Perhaps Sign up for Odd/Even day activities at different times of the day?

Who from the City Government is assigned or volunteers to work on programming these healthy, needed activities as May arrives?

Again postpone regular business of the council. Don't focus **now** on what can **wait until after** we get through the COVID 19 emergency and all citizens can participate in good government.

What is the plan for getting all voters mail-in ballots for the next election?

Find more ways to reach-out and help citizens and businesses and let us know how and who is doing it.

The Blue Angels & Thunderbirds flew over Garfield at about 12:10PM today April 28, 2020 to honor the heroes on the front line of fighting COVID 19. I hope many Garfield Residents understood what the loud roar and visual display of Army & Navy aircraft represented.

Give us lots of reason to celebrate, have hope and be encouraged at this very sad, sobering, and scary time. Assign people to think outside the box in this regard.

CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS

Look for ways to help alleviate the financial worry. Follow the State and Federal examples of financial relief to citizens.

Look at how the pressure of property taxes and utilities can be lifted for a while. What relief from property and utility payments have been considered or worked out? Will you follow the Governors suggestion of delaying property taxes until at least June 1?

Please consider putting questions/issues that require citizens to participate fully in good government on the back burner.

Look at ways to fully inform the public. NJ's peak is probably now and then there's the other side of the curve. The weather is changing. This will effect our definition of the expectation to harbor/shelter in place.

Help us modify what we need to do in a positive way and still stay safe.

Focus on what can get us through this crisis; spiritually, emotionally, financially, physically.

We need your support and help now.

Elaine

Elaine Giardino
109 Marsellus Pl.

City Clerk Pavlica read the following statements and questions that were received via email:

1. Any update from Mr Duch on Fleischers Brook repairs? It was stated by Mr Duch at a meeting in the Fall of 2019 that this work would begin in the Spring of 2020 at those specific locations most in need of repair. I am most concerned about the Market St crossing which has been hazardous for a few years now and is cordoned off with police barrels.

2. Any update on the replacement of the granite block which the Kasmir Pulaski statue is mounted on? This is also a project that was projected by Mr Duch for the Spring of 2020. Donations were collected and promises were made concerning names being engraved on either the stone itself or a plate attached to the stone. Current stone, as has been discussed, is the wrong size. Statue currently has noting to indicate who is memorialized.

"Unknown Soldier".

Also light at the base of statue needs repair. There are only 2 lights and one is out.

Thank You
Ed Devine
159 Market St
Garfield

Hi Drew,

Hope all is well with you and your family.

I would like to have this question read and answered.

Thank you and stay safe

Joan Banez
20 Hepworth Pl

I would like to ask a question about a property on Passaic Street and I would like to have it answered.

CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS

As of date, who is the current property owner of 100 Passaic Street, the Old Theater which is part of the overdevelopment for Passaic Street? Are there any known contamination issues on this property?

I am sending this question prior to the 7:00 pm meeting and I am sure this will allow sufficient time for Garfield to obtain the correct answer.

City Clerk Pavlica also read the following statements and questions which were sent in electronically during the conduct of this meeting by Joan Banez of 20 Hepworth Place:

Please read in entirety and both questions answered. At the last City Council Meeting it was voted upon to approve, before questions and comments, to negotiate a PILOT program for the redevelopment properties on Passaic Street, specifically the old theater and the old Mr. G's building.

1. What evidence has the developer presented to the City of Garfield as to the needs for a tax abatement program for the redevelopment, in order for the project to be completed?
2. Will the developer be paying the full School Tax and full County Tax specifically on the Passaic Street 105 unit development?

EXIT OF COUNCILMEMBER ERIN DELANEY

At 7:45 PM, Councilmember Erin Delaney left the Meeting and it was duly noted for the record.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

City Manager Duch answered questions and explained issues that were raised by the public for this evening's meeting.

Councilmember Calandriello thanked Elaine Giardino for her concerns. He spoke on the School Board Election which will be held Tuesday, May 12, 2020, and the ballots that will be entirely "Vote By Mail". He spoke on people being able to pay their water and sewer bills until June 1, 2020, without an interest penalty for paying late. He thanked Ed Devine on his comments regarding Fleischer's Brook and the General Casimir Pulaski Monument in the Riverfront Park along the Passaic River near the intersection of Market Street. He thanked Joan Banez regarding her remarks in connection with 100 Passaic Street and the negotiations regarding a possible PILOT Agreement and environmental issues in connection with that property. He spoke on possible ratables in connection with the proposed Kalama Chemical Redevelopment site near the intersection of River Drive and Monroe Street. He compared the property taxes paid by the Venetian Restaurant located at 546 River Drive and the possible taxes proposed to be collected by a development at the Kalama Chemical site. He mentioned the property taxes paid by the Redevelopment site at the intersection of River Drive and Outwater Lane. He spoke on reoccurring sewer backups in the neighborhood of Shaw Street and Lanza Avenue, and Shaw Street and Madeline Avenue. He offered his condolences to the family and friends for the loss of their loved ones who have passed away due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. He said that he never ever would have imagined he would see what is happening to the members of this community. He said that he is hoping that at the next Council Meeting it can be said that there is no more loss of life and that people's families are doing well. He said that he cannot thank our essential workers enough for what they are doing, from the nurses to the doctors to the workers in the DPW, the Municipal Workers, all those who are out there during this trying time. He spoke on the need to tell the public to stay home and shelter in place. He said that there are also people out there who are doing what they can, such as serving meals, so there is a bit of a mixed message being sent out. He said that people want to do more, but they are told, not to do more, to be safe. He said that to those who are out there, he gives them all the accolades in the world, and he thanks them for serving our seniors meals. He concluded by wishing everyone good health, and he told everyone to stay strong, healthy and well, and to be patient, so everyone will get through this together.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Joseph Delaney spoke on the 2020 Municipal Budget coming in with a 0% increase to help the taxpayers. He spoke on the Coronavirus Pandemic causing the unemployment rate to go up so high. He said that a lot of people are struggling right now and to come in with a 0% increase, is important. He spoke on extending the deadline for payment of water and sewer bills. He thanked everybody involved with formulating the 2020 Municipal Budget, including the Interim Chief Financial Officer, the City Auditor, and the City Manager. He said that they all who did a really great job coming up with a really great Budget. He said that he is so happy to be a part of it. He said that Redevelopment is one of the main reasons that City Officials are able to bring the Budget numbers down to 0% for the taxpayers. He said that he is Pro-Redevelopment and he wants to see it happen and it will happen. He spoke on the property at the intersection of River Drive and Monroe Street being empty for years. He spoke on multiple towns negotiating PILOT agreements to encourage Redevelopment. He said that if a Redeveloper wants to negotiate a PILOT Agreement and the answer is immediately “no”, the Developer is liable to abandon Garfield and go to another town, instead of City Officials just listening to the proposal, and seeing if it is feasible for the City. He spoke on the Coronavirus Pandemic that is affecting the State and City and Country. He said that he wants to express his thanks to the City Manager, Mayor, the Coronavirus Task Force, and everyone involved. He said that when he speaks with Officials from other municipalities, he realizes how much more Garfield has done than other towns. He said that he is so proud to say he is from the City of Garfield, with the work that is being done. He said that he so misses going to a Yankee baseball game, or to a high school baseball game, or watching young kids play. He said that it hurts him, and it hurts other people in the City, and people are getting upset because it is human nature. He said that everyone yearns for what was had in the past, and when things get back to normal, everyone is going to cherish it more, and realize how lucky we are. He said to pray for everyone in our City and in our Country. He thanked City Manager Duch for bringing testing to City Hall a couple of weeks ago for people in the City, and it is because of that that he was able to find out that he was positive, himself, while having no symptoms. He said that he had no clue that he had it. He said that if he was not tested, he would not have been quarantined, and he could have brought the disease to who knows who. He said that because he was tested, he was able to find out, and do what he had to do, and be quarantined. He again said to pray for everyone.

Mayor Rigoglioso spoke on how he tested positive for the Coronavirus a couple of weeks ago, and he said that had flu-like symptoms for several days. He said that he was fortunate, to not to need to be admitted to the hospital. He spoke on the need for more testing sites, and for the need for a faster turn-around time with the test results. He said that he will be taking an antibody test tomorrow. He said that he hopes to be able to donate plasma. He said that there may be a second wave, if people do not get a handle on this virus. He said that when he sits on conference calls with Mayors, everybody wants to know where everyone will be in the near future. He spoke on the potential easing of social distancing restrictions, especially for businesses, as long as there are guidelines to keep people safe. He spoke on the need for businesses to open again, to build on the economy, because if that cannot happen, there will be serious economic issues down the line. He said that there is a need to adhere to the rules and policies. He said that warmer weather is coming and everyone will be chomping at the bit to get outside, but social distancing policies will have to be followed. He spoke on the need to wear a mask because you do not know if the person to the left or right of you is clean of the virus. He spoke on there being 36 deaths in Garfield due to the coronavirus and 687 confirmed coronavirus cases in town. He spoke on how about 5% of those diagnosed with the coronavirus have passed away. He said that he would like to see Garfield's numbers go down and see the hospitals go back to normal. He said that when Joan Banez asked about contamination, she probably meant the Kalama Chemical site, and not the Passaic Street site. He said that with everything going on, there are a lot of people stepping up to the plate, and he spoke on a business on Belmont Avenue wanting to donate food to the First Responders. He spoke on “Sew Sistas” making over 300 masks for the people of Garfield. He spoke on the teachers utilizing 3D copiers to make over 200 plastic masks that they donated to health care facilities. He spoke on how the Albanian Alliance donated over 350 cases of water and 100 bagels that he dropped off at the senior buildings. He spoke on a group called “Town Hall” that donated nylon masks. He spoke on how during these trying times, you see a lot of good coming out of people. He spoke on a ten year old student named Alana Ponce who is giving out free food and supplies. He said that these are tough times, and we may have been knocked down, but we are not knocked out.

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He said that people from Garfield are tough and it is tough to see 36 people pass away and 687 people be diagnosed with the virus, but the most important thing is that the City get better, get stronger and through the lessons learned, hopefully, this never happens again. He said that if it does happen again, the City will be prepared.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:25 PM, there being no further business, Councilmember Calandriello moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Joseph Delaney duly seconded the motion.

On call of roll, Ayes 3, Absent 2 –
Councilmembers Aloia and Erin Delaney

Andrew J. Pavlica, CITY CLERK