



**LAKE COMO BOROUGH
1740 MAIN STREET
LAKE COMO, NJ 07719
MINUTES**

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2024
REGULAR MEETING**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Higgins called the meeting to order at 7:32pm

SALUTE TO FLAG AND MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

SUNSHINE LAW

Introduction as required under the Sunshine Law: Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the adoption of a Resolution by the Mayor and Council on the second day of January 2024 in which Resolution the time and place of Agenda and Regular Meetings commencing with January 2, 2024 were set forth. Notice of same was delivered to the Asbury Park Press the Coast Star and TAPinto and a copy of the notice was posted on the borough website at www.lakecomonj.org and on the bulletin board in Borough Hall. All meetings are open to the public.

ROLL CALL

Douglas Witte	Absent
Hawley Scull	Present
Christopher D'Antuono	Present
Nick DeMauro	Present
Peter Ventrice	Present
Heather Albala-Doyle	Present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Scull made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 3, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Councilwoman Albala-Doyle, all are in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS

No Communications on the Agenda

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- Councilwoman Albala-Doyle reported that all matters are in order.
- Councilman Ventrice reported that all matters are in order.
- Councilman DeMauro reported that all matters are in order and deferred his report to Police Chief Tina Scott and Borough Administrator Andrew Huisman.

- Chief Scott reported that the 1st Annual Kid's Fishing Tournament will be held this Saturday, September 21st from 12:00pm – 2:00pm with registration from 11:00am – 12:00pm.
 - Borough Administrator Andrew Huisman reported that the First Aid Department is working great with no issues there.
- Councilman D'Antuono reported that all matters are in order.
 - Councilwoman Scull reported that this Saturday, September 21st, there are three events being celebrating the 100th Anniversary and Lake Como Day. The Lake Como 100th Anniversary 5k will be held beginning and ending at McCann's. Following that is the 1st Annual Kid's Fishing Tournament sponsored by the Belmar Police Department from 12:00pm – 2:00pm. Then from 4:00pm – 9:00pm, Lake Como Day will take place. There will be food and craft vendors, beer and wine garden, tons of kids' activities and fireworks over the lake. All other matters are in order.
 - Mayor Higgins reported the following:

Thank you to everyone who attended our lengthy workshop on the Assessment Demonstration Program at our last meeting. The council asked pertinent questions, as did the members of the public who were in attendance. After the meeting, I received a follow-up from residents with additional questions. I did my best to answer those questions via email. My overall thoughts on this program and the mayor and council's role in this process are simple. We have to answer the question: Is the current tax assessment program the best for the borough of Lake Como? We have heard much about what the law and the constitution say, but none of that describes ADP as required. The Monmouth County Tax Board decided to enter into this program over a decade ago for all municipalities in the county. Currently, the topic is being discussed in closed session because we are seeking advice from our attorney. If and when a decision is made about our relationship with ADP we will bring that decision to a vote in public for discussion.

I must agree that something does not seem right about the situation we are currently in. I do not disagree with what the county tax assessor said, I do not think our borough tax assessor has done anything he was not supposed to do. However, in my opinion, the borough is being told we MUST do something that other counties and state municipalities do not have to do. Including many municipalities in the area.

I think ADP has been good for the borough, but it may be time to look at alternatives. This is not just a problem on North Blvd. It will also be an issue in another neighborhood of town when someone purchases a property well over the asking price to use it as an Air B&B. I go back to a discussion we had in 2020 when we were talking about parking and one ways over Zoom. The responsibility of this council is to make the town is safe and inviting for those visiting, but protect those that live here. Once the council receives advice from our attorney we can make public statements about our intentions moving forward.

I met with two different committees last night about the traffic patterns and parking regulations in two specific areas of Lake Como. The first committee consisting of Councilman DeMauro and Councilwoman Scull discussed the area of Newman Street. There was a great discussion about the needs for the community as far as accessing a road to be able to drive out of town. Two recommendations were on the table, one recommendation was to remove the parking from the East side of the street and create a two way road way. The second was to leave the parking and flip the entire stretch of Newman Street's one way direction Northbound instead of Southbound. As a result of the meeting the resolution next meeting will reflect the first option. Removing parking and making the street two way. This option was chosen due to the fact that it was the original option discussed by the council during the Workshop meeting in August. Also, if this option proves unhelpful we can always move to option 2 in reversing the one ways.

The second committee to meet was Councilman DeMauro and Councilwoman Albala-Doyle to discuss the area of Greenwood and Bradley Terrace. There is a recommendation from our Borough Engineer to stipulate both Greenwood and Bradley as one way streets due to the inability of vehicles to drive through the streets in opposite directions. This opinion was supported by the Chief of Police, Fire Official, and EMS Official as been an issue of safety. With the change in these two road ways, 18th Avenue will continue to be a seasonal one way, but will begin at the eastern side of the Bradley Terrace intersection. Therefore, 18th avenue between New Bedford Road and Bradley Terrace will be a two way street. Cars exiting from Bradley can turn left or right out of that street.

Finally the ordinance will also have the stipulation to remove parking on the south side of 18th avenue at all times, year round. This actually seems to be the least controversial aspect of the discussion.

Residents who wish to comment on these upcoming parking and one way regulations can do so tonight during the public comment period of the agenda, and again next meeting prior to the council voting.

Finally, I bring a request from the Planning Board for the council to consider an ordinance prohibiting stones or loose gravel to be used within the road verge, which is the area between the roadway and the sidewalk. This has been a topic of discussion for many years. And with the increased street cleaning the amount of stone in the road is causing concern of property damage for our residents. We can put a workshop meeting on for the next meeting to discuss this issue. I ask counsel and our town clerk to do some research on other municipalities who may have this restriction for their residents for use as reference.

All other matters are in order.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No Unfinished Business

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman DeMauro made a motion to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Councilwoman Scull, all are in favor.

No Public Comments

Councilman DeMauro made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Councilwoman Albala-Doyle, all are in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items listed under this section are considered to be routine by the Borough Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

Resolution 2024-124
Refund of Street Opening Escrow

Councilwoman Scull made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Councilman DeMauro, all are in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance 2024-10

First Reading and Introduction

Bond Ordinance – Behrman Park Improvements

Offered by Councilwoman Albala-Doyle, seconded by Councilman Ventrice, roll call vote as follows:

Yes: Councilmembers Witte, Scull, D’Antuono, DeMauro, Ventrice and Albala-Doyle

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilman Witte

Ordinance 2024-11

First Reading and Introduction

Bond Ordinance – Margerum Avenue, 21st Avenue and 22nd Avenue

Offered by Councilman D’Antuono, seconded by Councilwoman Scull, roll call vote as follows:

Yes: Councilmembers Witte, Scull, D’Antuono, DeMauro, Ventrice and Albala-Doyle

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilman Witte

Resolution 2024-125

Payment of Bills

Offered by Councilwoman Scull, seconded by Councilman Ventrice, roll call vote as follows:

Yes: Councilmembers Witte, Scull, D’Antuono, DeMauro, Ventrice and Albala-Doyle

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilman Witte

Resolution 2024-126

Shared Service Agreement – Code Enforcement Services

Offered by Councilman DeMauro, seconded by Councilman Ventrice, roll call vote as follows:

Yes: Councilmembers Witte, Scull, D’Antuono, DeMauro, Ventrice and Albala-Doyle

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilman Witte

Resolution 2024-127

Executive Session

Offered by Councilman Ventrice, seconded by Councilwoman Scull, roll call vote as follows:

Yes: Councilmembers Witte, Scull, D’Antuono, DeMauro, Ventrice and Albala-Doyle

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Councilman Witte

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Councilwoman Scull made a motion to open the meeting to the public, seconded by Councilwoman Albala-Doyle, all are in favor.

- Clare Hayner of 18th Avenue and B Street came before the Council to remind them that the NJ Run for the Fallen will come through Belmar on September 29th.
- Stephen Petrosino of 18th Avenue asked the Council to consider allowing cars to make a left turn out of Greenwood Terrace when voting on changes to the one-way streets and parking ordinance.
- Jean Gardner of Greenwood Terrace stated she has been sideswiped and still doesn’t feel that turning Greenwood Terrace into a one-way street is necessary.
- Chelsea Boyle of Greenwood Terrace expressed her concerns that turning Greenwood into a one-way would be a safety concern with increased speed and cars still making k-turns on the street.
- Ron DeSorbo of Greenwood Terrace stated he understands the need for seasonal one-way street but for the 2 weeks since Labor Day there has not been any issues and feels it would be a major inconvenience. Mr. DeSorbo also asked for more information on the bond ordinances and Mayor Higgins responded that he will get him more information on those.
- Ron Cariola of North Blvd. asked for any follow-up on the ADP from the last meeting and Mayor Higgins responded that the Borough is still seeking advice from our attorney. Mr. Cariola stated that moving on, he doesn’t feel like the homes on North Blvd. should carry the burden and he is opposed to the new town hall being built.
- Jim Buchanan asked in Councilman D’Antuono received the information from Matt Clark regarding similar increases in the County. Mr. Buchanan questioned what the Borough receives for the \$1.6 million dollars we pay in County taxes. Mr. Buchanan sent the Council a report analysis which he gave an overview of

and stated that Zillow does not reflect the assessors jump in assessments. Mr. Buchanan stated that he feels the residents of North Blvd. were targeted and wants the Council to take careful consideration and opt out of ADP.

- Janice Biehler of Greenwood Terrace thinks that the idea of the no parking on 18th Avenue is a great idea but feels Greenwood and Bradley Terraces should only be seasonal one-way.
- Rod McKenzie of Wildwood Place stated that there is no thru traffic problems since the one-way on 18th Avenue has been in place and he would like to ee a professional study done before changes are made.

Councilwoman Scull made a motion to close the meeting to the public, seconded by Councilwoman Albala-Doyle, all are in favor.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Mayor and Council will be held on Tuesday, October 1, 2024 at 7:30 PM in the Lake Como Meeting Room. All meetings are open to the public.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Councilwoman Scull made a motion to adjourn and seconded by Councilwoman Albala-Doyle, all are in favor.

Respectfully Submitted
Amy L. Boney. RMC
Borough Clerk

The minutes of this meeting are not verbatim. Please call Borough Hall at (732)681-3232 to schedule an appointment to hear the recording(s) of this meeting in its entirety. All recordings are subject to being destroyed 80 days after the approval of the Minutes.