

TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 19, 2023 — 7:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** 7:02 pm **By CP Wyant**
2. **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT STATEMENT** **Read by CVP Clark**
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE** – CP Wyant asked for a moment of silence in memory of Larry Marino Sr. a Phillipsburg Police Officer of 25 years who recently passed.
4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** **All**
5. **INVOCATION** **Led by Councilman Piazza**
6. **ROLL CALL** – Present - Wyant, Clark, Piazza, Marino, Kennedy
-Also in attendance: Mayor Tersigni, Business Administrator Hall, Attorney Wenner, Deputy Clerk Turner.
7. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – September 5, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries 5-0

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza	X		X			
Councilman Marino		X	X			
Councilman Kennedy			X			
Council VP Clark			X			
Council President Wyant			X			

8. BILLS LIST –

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries 5-0

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza			X			
Councilman Marino			X			
Councilman Kennedy		X	X			
Council VP Clark	X		X			
Council President Wyant			X			

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS – None

10. MAYOR’S REPORT/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
MAYOR'S REPORT **SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

First, I would like to acknowledge the passing of Sergeant Larry Marino, Jr. who gave many years of meritorious service to the Town of Phillipsburg. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Marino family at this time. I was pleased to see a strong turnout at our 9/11 ceremony in Shappell Park on September 11th.

I am pleased to report that the transformation of Walters Park is moving along nicely with the pickleball and basketball courts nearly completed and continued progress on the Cal Ripken Field. Development projects throughout town including the Elks Building, Popeyes and Arby's continue to move forward. I have received word from the developer of the planned senior housing and grocery store at the former Norton Complex that construction will begin on the grocery store very soon. Also, four years ago our town had around 600 abandoned buildings-today we stand at less than 50.

Last week we had a very productive preconstruction meeting with the contractor for the asbestos and mold remediation work at the Corliss Avenue building. Work will begin in mid-October and is expected to be completed by mid-January. The careful remediation and evaluation of our former municipal building is a critical step forward for our Town after years of inaction.

Finally, I'd like to announce my appointees for the Open Space Committee: Steve Stocker, Kelly Lefler, Tina Longacre, and Nancy Reilly. The first order of business for this important committee will be to work with our Business Administrator and Engineer on a longstanding issue between the Town of Phillipsburg and Green Acres which, once resolved, will allow our Town to access much needed Green Acres funding which will greatly benefit our existing parks as well as our planned Rails to Trails project.

Respectfully Submitted, Todd M. Tersigni Mayor of Phillipsburg

11. PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Joe Meyner, 392 South Main Street, Phillipsburg – regarding the sidewalks at McDonald's-. On Marshall St, a 3 ft wide sidewalk ending in a 2 ft high retaining wall with a crosswalk across the rear entrance would give safe pedestrian passage. On Union Highway (Rt 22) there is no safe way for pedestrians to deal with the entrance and egress to and from McDonald's. Both neighbors have or will have safe walkway to the proposed Marshall Street sidewalk. CP Wyant stated that the McDonald's sidewalk waiver discussion has been postponed to the October 3rd meeting.

Public Discussion Session closed.

12. ORDINANCES FOR 2ND READING – No ordinances for second reading.

**13. ORDINANCES FOR 1ST READING –
O2023-14 ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING ARTICLE XXI – HISTORIC PRESERVATION – OF CHAPTER 625 ENTITLED “ZONING” TO MODIFY DEADLINES APPLICABLE TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Public Discussion – None
Council Discussion - None

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries 5-0

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza			X			
Councilman Marino			X			
Councilman Kennedy		X	X			

Council VP Clark	X		X			
Council President Wyant			X			

14. RESOLUTIONS ** CONSENT AGENDA **

Matters listed on the Consent Agenda Resolutions are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion of the Council and one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests an item to be removed for consideration

R2023-169 HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES

R2023-170 AUTHORIZING A REFUND OF PAVILION RENTAL FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$100.00 TO CAMILLE BATES

R2023-171 A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE INSERTION OF SPECIAL ITEM OF REVENUE IN THE BUDGET OF ANY COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY PURSUANT TO N.J.S. 40A:4-87 (CHAPTER 159, P.L. 1948)

R2023- 172 AUTHORIZING A REFUND OF PAVILION RENTAL FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$100.00 TO DENNIS COCHRAN

R2023-173 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF M35A3 6X6 HIGH WATER RESCUE TRUCK FROM EASTERN SURPLUS & EQUIPMENT CO.

R2023-174 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF WING P4.2 RESCUE BOAT UNDER STATE CONTRACT # 21-FOOD-05224

R2023-175 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR SEWER UTILITY SYSTEM ASSESSMENT, VALUATION STUDY & WIPA PROCESS ASSISTANCE WITH REMINGTON & VERNICK ENGINEERS, INC. PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a)(i)

ROLL CALL

Motion Carries

5-0

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza			X			
Councilman Marino			X			
Councilman Kennedy	X		X			
Council VP Clark		X	X			
Council President Wyant			X			

Resolutions 2023-176 and 2023-177 were added after the agenda was published and are not included in the Consent Agenda vote.

R2023-176

RESOLUTION RENEWING 2023-2024 LIQUOR LICENSES WITHIN TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG

ROLL CALL**Motion Carries****5-0**

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza	X		X			
Councilman Marino			X			
Councilman Kennedy		X	X			
Council VP Clark			X			
Council President Wyant			X			

R2023-177

RESOLUTION TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY
 APPROVING PERSON TO PERSON AND PLACE TO PLACE TRANSFER OF LIQUOR LICENSE
 FOR PLENARY RETAIL CONSUMPTION

ROLL CALL**Motion Carries****5-0**

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza			X			
Councilman Marino			X			
Councilman Kennedy	X		X			
Council VP Clark		X	X			
Council President Wyant			X			

15. OLD BUSINESS –

McDonald’s Sidewalk waiver – postponed to the October 3, 2023 meeting.

16. NEW BUSINESS –. Hill Street Moratorium Appeal of Financial Hardship**ROLL CALL****Motion Carries****5-0**

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza			X			
Councilman Marino		X	X			
Councilman Kennedy	X		X			
Council VP Clark			X			
Council President Wyant			X			

- 17. MOTIONS –** Special Event Application – Pork Roll Palooza
 Special Event Application – Phillipsburg Railroad Festival
 Junior Firefighter Application – Kadim Ziems

Councilmembers	First	Second	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Piazza		X	X			
Councilman Marino	X		X			
Councilman Kennedy			X			
Council VP Clark			X			
Council President Wyant			X			

18. PUBLIC PETITIONS

-Joan Pierce, Prospect Street, Phillipsburg – Were those who graffitied the bandshell caught? Mayor Tersigni stated it is being looked into.

-Ms. Cox, 293 Cedar Alley – Her house sits directly at the corner of the alley. Her neighbors park in the alley and have damaged the house and her garbage cans. She built a box in which to store the cans and applied for a variance for the box but was told by Property Maintenance Inspector Andrew Melendez that the variance was not approved. Matthew Hall explained that the box is within the alley right of way and zoning does not allow for a structure in a right of way. CP Wyant asked Matthew Hall and Attorney Wenner to work with the resident and existing regulations and try to allow for the box.

-Isaiah Corn, Warthogs travel football team, Edison field, resident of Phillipsburg – Mr. Corn has established the football team for the youth of Phillipsburg but has run into obstacles finding a practice field. He spoke with the Recreation Director, Matt Noel but the cost of \$125 per week to use a field is much higher than the \$75 per season he currently pays Harmony. CP Wyant asked Matthew Hall to work with Mr. Corn and Matt Noel. Mayor Tersigni told Mr. Corn he can contact him for assistance.

Councilman Piazza stated a shared services agreement similar to the one with Steel Hill should be investigated. The new Cal Ripken field will offer more space for practices and games.

-Ray Patt, 459 Eagle Ave, Phillipsburg – Mr. Patt congratulated the football team, the Bulldogs and the field hockey team for their recent wins. He stated the football games were not aired on television, despite the High School having a dedicated channel. Mr. Hall will contact Service Electric. Mr. Patt invited people to attend the High School Football teams’ game against Hillsborough at Rutgers’ Stadium on Sunday at 12:00.

-Dan Boyce, 1526 Warren St, Alpha – Mr. Boyce stated that a police report filed for an alleged physical assault at the municipal building in 2019 was proven false based on video evidence. He asked why charges of filing a false police report were never filed. He stated he was arrested for removing a political sign. Attorney Wenner stated this is not the proper forum for this discussion and Council was not involved in the alleged 2019 incident. Mr. Boyce stated he was making Council aware, but the town does not want it addressed.

-Bernie Fey, 1070 Rosen St, Phillipsburg – Mr. Fey encourage Council to assist Mr. Corn. What he is doing is a credit to the town.

- Aaron Coleman, 3 Fairview Heights, Phillipsburg – Mr. Coleman handed out brochures and maps for the Railroad Festival this weekend. He reviewed the lineup of entertainment, vendors, various train rides, and train exhibits. He said the Festival has grown significantly since last year with many more vendors and sponsors. He encouraged everyone to attend and said several state officials and dignitaries will be there. Mr. Coleman believes the Festival will continue to grow and will help bring tourism back to Phillipsburg.

Public Petitions closed.

19. COUNCIL OPEN TIME

Councilman Marino –commended Mr. Corn on what he is trying to do with the youth of Phillipsburg. He recommended Mr. Corn contact Alpha and the Phillipsburg High School Athletic Director. Mr. Corn stated he did contact both but was told by the Athletic Director that since his team is

not a feeder team, he could not use the field. He was also told by another person he wouldn't receive support since the team's colors are the same as Easton's.

Councilman Kennedy –extended condolences to the Marino family and said all of Phillipsburg has the Marino family in their thoughts. He is excited about the Railroad Festival and thanked Aaron Coleman and all who have helped make it happen. He attended the Firth Youth Center Banquet last week and he is proud of all the work the Firth Youth Center does for the children of Phillipsburg.

Council Vice President Clark – extended condolences to the Marino family. Over the weekend he attended the 1st annual Phillipsburg Drug Awareness Day. He thanked all who came out in support as addiction is a serious battle waged by many. He congratulated Steel Hill on their win this weekend. The Railroad Festival is bigger and better and will continue to grow. It will bolster local businesses and spark growth and innovation.

Councilman Piazza – is looking forward to the Railroad Festival. Wished an enjoyable Yom Kippur to all who celebrate. He stated Phillipsburg EMS recently obtained a high water truck through a Federal Grant so now the town will have two of them to help when flooding occurs. He enjoyed the Firth Youth Center Banquet this weekend.

Council President Wyant – stated the Railroad Festival blows him away. Highlighting the long railroad history in town is wonderful. The Polar Express is always fantastic. All of this brings people to Phillipsburg and has a positive effect on the community.

20. EXECUTIVE SESSION IF REQUIRED – No Executive Session

21. ADJOURNMENT – 7:57 PM

Council VP Clark moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilman Kennedy.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

Motion passed.