

**CITY OF ESTELL MANOR  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
April 9, 2014**

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Official Newspaper and was posted on the City Bulletin Board in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Teasenfitz at approximately 7:00 pm. The flag salute and a moment of silence were observed.

**Roll call:** Present: Barbetto-yes; Haeser-yes; Cunningham-absent; Givens-yes; Teasenfitz-yes  
City Solicitor, Alfred Scerni was also present.

*Motions: Haeser/Givens to open meeting to public comment, voice vote with all in favor.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Judy Cassagrande spoke about the strategic planning committee which was created with the Estell Manor School. She wanted to confirm that all Council members were on her email list to keep them informed. She commented on a brochure being created by June Heath informing the public of the events available through the school to the public. These events included recreation programs open to high school age individuals through senior citizens.

Joseph Venezia shared with Council his involvement with the City in the past. He stated in the past budget workshops were always held prior to adopting the new calendar year budget and he expressed his concern with Council not having a budget workshop meeting this year. He stated the public is not informed of the budget or costs incurred to the taxpayer's. He also commented on the new business hours set for City Hall.

Creed Pogue stated several other municipalities do not observe budget workshop meetings, which are not mandatory.

At approximately 7:15 pm the Acting Clerk paused the recording of the meeting because Councilman Cunningham entered the meeting.

Teasenfitz briefly brought Cunningham up to speed on the meeting discussions which have taken place since the beginning of the meeting.

Pogue continued his comments on the budget process by other municipalities as compared to Estell Manor. He referenced a current City issued permit in place and that all the necessary fees may not have been paid. He suggested that Council require administrative personnel follow through with procedures in place to address any violations of the City's Codes. Pogue asked what matters would be discussed during executive session.

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Scerni stated they involved the pending litigation of Johnson vs. City of Estell Manor.

Pogue continued to express his concerns regarding excessive costs incurred by the City for legal services and stated it is not good stewardship.

Venezia addressed Resolution #43-2014 listed on the agenda and suggested Council consider tabling this resolution until the County has reported their position on this matter.

Diane Pogue asked if a study had been conducted by the Atlantic County Government on their findings for a County wide tax assessing service as opposed to individual tax assessors per municipality. She stated the Gloucester County Pilot Program is still being reviewed.

*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to close meeting to public comment, voice vote taken with all in favor.*

**ENGINEER'S REPORT**

Mike Fralinger was present to review the engineer's report distributed to Mayor and Council. The ADA construction project will be starting in the near future once the contractor has been notified of a notice to proceed. A safe streets grant funding program was discussed between the engineer and Council. Fralinger explained the program is geared more towards larger populated towns with higher traffic areas. Fralinger included that the costs and paperwork process exceeds the efforts put forth to make it feasible for the City.

The full engineer's report is on file in the City Clerk's office.

Sergeant Babinscheck of the State Police Barracks in Buena Vista Township was present to report on recent activity within the City of Estell Manor. He stated he and other officers make appearances at several towns throughout the County to report on activity in their municipality. He stated the bulk of the calls they receive come from Folsom or Buena Vista Township locals. He informed Council and the public that the State Police are currently working on utilizing an office within City Hall to use as a substation to process paperwork. The police would install computer equipment at no cost to the City. The increased presence of the officers in the area could be a deterrent to criminals or any undesirable activity. He also stated new police academy graduates will be providing additional officers in the near future.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**42-2014                      A Resolution to Read the 2014 Budget by Title Only**

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*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to approve Resolution#42-2014*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**ORDINANCES/PUBLIC HEARING**

**04-2014                      A CAP Bank Ordinance**

**2014 BUDGET**

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to open public hearing on the 2014 budget, voice vote with all in favor.*

Joe Venezia asked Council what the City's tax increase is for this year's budget and the amount of budget increase for spending. He also asked Council if there was anywhere in this budget where costs could be cut. He pointed out the costs appropriated for the public works department. Venezia continued on comment on the public works department and the history of spending in this department. He offered his personal opinion on the costs incurred by public works and its necessity.

Teasenfitz stated the 2014 budget is almost identical to 2013 budget with the exception of the specific line item which is legal expenses.

Barbetto stated there may be a need to increase this area even more to allow for additional unanticipated expenses.

Creed Pogue stated he disagreed with Mr. Venezia's opinion on the appropriations for public works. He stated the increase in spending was for legal expenses not public works. He also commented on the appropriations set for the Historic Preservation Commission.

Al Sorg stated he has lived in Estell Manor for 17 years and it is his opinion that the City has been poorly maintained for years. He stated the current administration has made positive changes thus far this year and he supports the public works department and its employees. He suggested Council consider municipal bonds to bring the City up to speed with equipment and supplies.

Diane Pogue stated she supports public works. Other comments made were inaudible.

Venezia stated the financial situation the City is presently in is not mismanagement but by loss revenue over the years. He stated decreases in banking interest, state aide and the PILOT funding

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had a major impact on the amount of revenue the City relied on for many years. He also stated surplus issues affect all municipalities in New Jersey not Estell Manor alone.

Barbetto stated taxes were not increased over several years which was a direct opposite of the recommendations from both the City Auditor and Finance Officer to maintain appropriations and expenditures on an equal balance.

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to close meeting to public comment, voice vote taken with all in favor.*

*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to accept the 2014 City Budget as presented.*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**ORDINANCES/INTRODUCTION**

**06-2014                      An Ordinance Establishing Salaries and Remuneration for Certain Municipal Employees**

*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to accept Ordinance#06-2014 for introduction.*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**ORDINANCES/PUBLIC HEARING**

**03-2014                      An Ordinance Establishing the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code to Include in the City's Code Book**

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to open public hearing on Ordinance#03-2014, voice vote taken with all in favor.*

Joseph Venezia asked what changes were made to the copies previously provided to Council for consideration in the past and the current code present tonight. Commented on animal maintenance issues and the need for manure management on personal property. He also asked about vacant lots and grass height allowance per the code.

Creed Pogue asked if any other municipalities had animal regulations listed in their property maintenance code. He also asked if any sections of the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code were revised or eliminated before Council presented for adoption.

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Al Sorg stated he is in favor of this ordinance and has been for a long time to assure residents take care of their property. He referenced the City of Northfield and problems they faced with property maintenance and how they took action to rectify the problems. He stated residents should take pride in their property and it helps keep the property values up.

Venezia asked how the City enforces abandoned properties within the City and who is responsible for enforcing the code in this matter.

*Motions: Barbetto / Givens to close public hearing on Ordinance #03-2014, voice vote with all in favor.*

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to adopt Ordinance #03-2014*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**05-2014                      A Capital Improvement Ordinance to Purchase Computer Equipment**

*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to open public hearing on Ordinance#05-2014, voice vote with all in favor.*

Joseph Venezia asked about any type of insurance coverage on the current server. He asked which company will maintain the new system to be purchased.

Teasenfitz stated the current equipment cannot be fixed and it is dire jeopardy of losing critical data. He also stated the company would be Computers and Networks from Vineland, NJ.

Al Sorg stated he is in support of this purchase to keep the City's equipment up to date with its needs.

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to close public hearing on Ordinance#05-2014, voice vote with all in favor.*

*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to adopt Ordinance#05-2014*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**RESOLUTIONS**

**43-2014                      A Resolution Opposing Senate Bill S-1801 and Assembly Bill A-2621  
Seeking to Authorize County Government to Create County Tax  
Assessment While Abolishing Tax Assessment at a Local Municipal**

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**Level**

*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to approve Resolution#43-2014*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-no; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**44-2014                    A Resolution Awarding a Contract to Computers and Networks  
Unlimited for the Purchase, Installation and Service of Computer  
Equipment and Operating Systems for City Hall (Funds Certified and  
Approved by Ordinance#05-2014)**

*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to approve Resolution#44-2014*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**BILL LIST**

The City's CFO had supplied a bill list for payment of bills to Mayor and Council for their review and approval. Two items were addressed; the line item for Abbiamo Service First for the renewal of an annual maintenance contract was removed due to a discrepancy in the price. The City's CFO stated the school tax levy would be included on the next meeting bill list scheduled for April 23, 2014.

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to approve the bill list in the amount of \$19,646.05*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Monthly reports were submitted by the following departments for the month of March 2014; Clerk's Office, Municipal Court, Public Works, Tax Collector and Zoning Officer.

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to accept the department reports as listed, voice vote taken with all in favor.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Mold Remediation:** The City received three quotes for mold remediation for services for mold removal for the basement and some of the archived tax record books. Only one vendor submitted a quote to clean the mold on the books which could only be determined by visibly inspecting the books. The Mayor and Acting Clerk had discussed the quotes for services to be provided and recommended the lowest quote from CSI Cleaning Service, LLC for the job.

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*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to approve CSI Cleaning Service, LLC to perform the mold remediation services required not to exceed \$2,000.00*

Cunningham inquired if the mold affected books would be transferred into digital format after they had been cleaned.

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**Sports Field Update:** Teasenfitz reviewed the work which had been previously approved by Council for Lawn Doctor to treat and fertilize the soccer fields. He stated he had spoken with both Councilman Haeser and Public Works Foreman Brian Johnson to discuss the next step in treatment to the fields. He stated they wanted to be proactive to allow seeding and lime to be done without waiting due to a small window of opportunity to continue treatment on the fields. He explained he is asking Council to approve \$850.00 for the purchase of grass seed in advance subject to the approval by the sports complex committee on when it will be spread.

Cunningham asked if the fields would be aerated and thatched prior to the seed application.

*Motions: Barbetto / Givens to approve the purchase of grass seed for the soccer fields not to exceed \$850.00.*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**Hardenbergh Insurance Quote:** A quote was submitted to Mayor and Council from Hardenbergh Insurance Group regarding the optional excess liability limits for both auto/general liability and public officials/employment practices liability coverage.

Barbetto explained the current coverage the City has and the options available to increase the current coverage.

*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to approve an increase in insurance liability coverage for a total annual increase of \$1,180.087.*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**Technical Service Quotes:** Barbetto explained that certain computer and video surveillance camera equipment needed to be relocated to accommodate the new configuration of the offices due to the ADA upgrade construction project. A quote was submitted from Computers and Networks Solutions to move computer equipment and install new storage cabinet in the Clerk's office in the amount of \$1,950.00.

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*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to approve the quote from Computer and Network Solutions for the services listed in the amount of \$1,950.00*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to approve a quote from S Solutions for the relocation and rewiring of video camera equipment in the amount of \$500.00.*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

Teasenfitz requested to attend the Annual Conference of Mayors in Atlantic City; the cost to attend is \$350.00.

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to approve Teasenfitz to attend the conference and the City pay the fee of \$350.00.*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

Teasenfitz stated he had offered the City employees to order City logo shirts using funds from the JIF Safety Incentive Program.

*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to approve the purchase of shirts using funds from the JIF safety fund not to exceed \$700.00*

*Roll Call: Barbetto-yes; Cunningham-yes; Givens-yes; Haeser-yes; Teasenfitz-yes*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to open meeting to public comment, voice vote with all in favor.*

Al Sorg commented on property tax increases as compared to other sources of revenue such as municipal bonding, cell tower and other ratable opportunities. He also stated his concern with the response time for calls to the State Police to Estell Manor.

Joseph Venezia stated the City has an ordinance in place in regards to solicitation which is referred to as hawkers and peddlers ordinance. He stated he felt the City should have sent a message via the City's Swiftreach system informing the residents of the City's budget adoption and the meeting date.

Creed Pogue commented on the City's community notification system in place and a reverse 911 system offered a few years ago through the County. He also made inaudible comments in reference to the executive session topic of discussion.



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*Motions: Barbetto / Haeser to close meeting to public comment, voice vote with all in favor.*

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to approve Resolution#45-2014, executive session to discuss matters relating to pending litigation, voice vote taken with all in favor.*

*Motions: Haeser / Barbetto to close executive session and enter into open meeting, voice vote taken with all in favor.*

City Solicitor, Fred Scerni summarized executive session discussion for the public. He stated in executive session Council discussed a certain matter of pending litigation, Johnson vs. the City of Estell Manor with Special Counsel. Special Counsel provided Mayor and Council with direction in relations to this matter. Additional information will be made public as it is received. This information is anticipated to be made available within the next 30 days at which time the information will be made known.

*Motions: Haeser / Givens to adjourn meeting at approximately 10:30 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Accepted:

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Fern A. Brown, Acting Clerk

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Mayor, Stephen Teasenfitz