

Fairness In Taxes

Meeting Minutes 01/04/17

Board Attendance: Bill & Sheila Hartranft, Marie & Dave Hayes, Don Kerns, Michael Hinchman, Suzasne Hornick, Vic Staniec & Jim Tweed

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 P.M. & welcome by Jim Tweed

December minutes approved with no changes.

OC Flooding Committee – Bill Hartranft for Suzanne Hornick

- We have been attempting to contact Jim Mallon with the following questions with no response:
 - When will construction work begin?
 - Have they formed the city/residents committee yet?
 - Will OC Flooding be contacted to be part of the committee?
- The Atlantic Press reported that work was not to begin until February due to permitting delay. This raises the question that if Baker had the information last year, who dropped the ball on permits?
- Michael Hinchman commented that a cogent letter be sent to Jim Mallon regarding the attempts made to contact him on the facts, architectural plans and the parameters. Then you might get a response.
- Vic Staniec suggested that Bob Barr would be a good contact regarding these issues. Suzanne responded that they did ask but were “shot down”. At this point Jim Twee suggested their questions from OC Flooding be added to the questions being submitted to Keith Hartzell and city council, who send them separately but be very specific.

Education – Vic Staniec

- The next school board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, 2017.
- Dennis Crowley is the acting temporary superintendent. Dr. Taylor will not be present and no explanation was given.
- A special meeting was called on December 14, 2016 regarding expelling a student, a 16 year old male. No information was forthcoming, confidentiality being cited.
- Teachers’ mean annual salary for the 2015/16 school year was \$88,354.00. Ocean City is #8 in the state. Atlantic City is #2.
- The annual audit was clean, with a fund surplus of \$1.5m, which will be set aside for future expenses.
- The number of students outside Ocean City is down.
- There is \$77,000.00 deficit with Aramark, supplier of student lunches. More students are bringing their lunch rather than buying it at school. They also needed more serving staff. They are expecting a deficit this year as well.

Treasurer’s Report – Bill Hartranft

- We currently have 901 members of which 41% have paid their dues so far, totaling \$6,825.00. One member made a contribution of \$500.00.
- Our savings account stands at \$15,420.00 with CD’s valued at \$12,688.00.
- At list of OC Flooding members was provided and members contacted. Only 1 response with dues was received.

City Revenue & Expenditures – Michael Hinchman

- Michael shared an article from the January 2017 issue of Philadelphia Magazine titled ““What happens at the Shore when no one’s looking”. Ocean City and Fairness In Taxes were featured in the article. For the full text you can google Philadelphia Magazine or go to www.phillymag.com and place the title in the search box.
- Michael suggested an ad be placed in the media on the Planning Board and what they’ve done regarding 10th & Palen. They have approved two gas pumps in the parking lot of the site.

City Revenue & Expenditures Cont'd – Michael Hinchman

- At 9th & Simpson Streets a Holiday-Leonard building of \$16,000 Sq. Ft. was not set back, but approved on April 15th.
- The Keller Williams building at 9th Street & Bay Avenue does not provide for sufficient parking. At this point Vic Staniec commented that parking/traffic shouldn't be a problem as they are not in the rental business, only sales and that anyone can appeal a Planning Board decision, they just don't.
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Guest Speakers Committee – Marie Hayes

- For our February meeting we will have a speaker from the American Littoral Society to talk about issues of coastal protection, i.e.; coastal protection, over-building, and public access.
- Plans for the April yet to be firmed up. If all goes as planned, our speaker will be Claire Abernathy from Stockton University's William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy to talk about transparency in Government. The Water Co. has been contacted but no date has been confirmed. Michael Hinchman suggested she contact Elizabeth Gimmell on their board and that she could use his name. Joe Elliot, city tax assessor was not interested in being our guest speaker.
- Michael Hinchman motioned that an ad be placed in the media to advertise the February speaker, seconded by Bill Hartranft, carried unanimously.

Web Communication Committee – Dave Hayes

- At this time Jim Rudolph has control of our web site. Dave recommended using Facebook, our web site and OC Flooding's site to disseminate information. Thought perhaps he and Jim Rudolph could form a partnership, to give FIT more control of the site.

Secretary' Report – Sheila Hartranft

- Working on the winter newsletter. We need articles as quickly as possible to meeting the publication target date of January 15, 2017.

Miscellaneous Items – Jim Tweed

- Jim provided us with the responses to FIT's questions to Keith Hartzell for review, noting that we can move forward with follow up questions, based on responses or any new issues.
- Executive Search Committee will continue to work at finding a new FIT president to take over in June 2017. Phil Brunone volunteered to draft a description and requirements for the position for publication, i.e.; ads, web site, etc.
- A friend of Marjorie Brooks confided that the Mayor's son's fiancée now has a part-time position with the city, and that they may have created a new position to accommodate her. Word is, city employees are not happy about it. It was recommended that Marjorie do an OPRA request to confirm the details.
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Old Business - None

- New Business – It was noted that the city was speaking about an ordinance for buskers on the boardwalk requiring fees, finger-printing of performers or their parents/guardians if they are minors.

Adjourned 8:50 P.M.

The next meeting (s) is scheduled for Wednesday, February 1, 2017, 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by:
Sheila Hartranft, Secretary