
BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

DATE: January 16, 2024

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held in councils' chambers at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito Musick and Conry

Also Present: Erik Peterson Attorney
Borough Manager, Brian Bond
Laurie A. Courter, Borough Clerk

Absent: Musick

Mayor Conry led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor Conry read the following statement into record:

The requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Express-Times (Warren County Edition and Star Ledger) and posted on the Boroughs website stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Brown to open the public comment portion of the meeting, all were in favor.

Brian Wilcox, Chairman, Historic Commission of Washington Township, gave a quick update since his last appearance. He spoke with the Township Administrator with the details on how this will look like a shared historical group. The Administrator is actively working on getting this information between the two towns, it will take a little time. One option is to try it as a PILOT program for a year or so to allow anyone to bail out if it isn't working for either town.

There is no money being considered at this time unless a sign is to be put up then both towns would share in the cost.

Mel Thiel, Executive Director of the BID, gave the following updates:

Business recognition dinner will be held on February 8th at Hawke Point, at 6pm. Tickets are on sale and can be purchased on the BIDS website.

Gearing up for 2024 with events and looking for sponsorships.

Marco Matteo 7 Railroad Avenue, stated that snow is not being shoveled at crosswalks at Routes 57 & 31, they have been like that for the past couple of snowstorms and wanted to make mention of it. Mr. Matteo sent a picture to the manager, of icicles underneath the railroads. Asked how the borough can address this to the railroad company to address this problem. Washington Theatre turns 97 next Wednesday on January 24th and asked Mr. Bond on an update with a recent court date that was supposed to be held on January 9th. Manager Bond stated another meeting will be held onsite on everything that needs to be done and another zoom meeting is scheduled for February 13th online and an in-person court appearance is scheduled for March 19th at 1:30pm

Hearing no further public comment, motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to close the public portion, all were in favor.

MINUTES

Motion to approve the following minutes made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov.

Discussion: Infinito asked for the re-organization meeting, for the committee assignments does council need to approve those.

December 19, 2023 (regular)

December 19, 2023 (executive)

January 2, 2024 (re-organization)

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, and Conry.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

REPORTS

Committee Reports:

Sewer-Infinito stated he is working with Manager Bond to nail down a date in early February (1st or 2nd) for Veolia, NJ Futures and Epic to do a site visit and tour the facility and around town. They plan to do a meet and greet will keep council posted if there will be a meet and greet.

Recreation-Infinito stated that he is working with Manager Bond to talk about restructuring pool fees and should have that at the next meeting. Manager Bond clarified what the 5013C entails. Pool fees are recommended by the committee and borough council approves. Recreation is supposed to work with the manager with what the fees are to be and any new policies. Discussions ensued regarding the former recreation commission and Mayor Conry asking for clarification for what the recreation committee does. Manager Bond stated that they are to work with him. The sports group is a 5013C and we have nothing to do with that. Borough Manager explaining the need to update the other ordinances. Bond is looking for forms that created the 5013C committee and looking for their by-laws. The recreation committee under the code book is supposed to be that the mayor appoints a council member to the committee along with a member of the board of education. Manager Bond reported that he contacted Craig of the 5013C who is a member but he will be moving so there will be some shift on who will be in charge of the non-profit,

Ordinance-Gorshkov reported that she is researching other towns' ordinances that we don't have that may be of help to the borough. Still making a list to update the code book and will have a report at next meeting.

Cannabis-Brown reported that Dank Poet is scheduled to have a soft opening on January 22nd from Noon until 8:00 PM.

Land Use Board-Mayor Conry reported that the meeting was canceled.

VOUCHERS-Approval of Claims

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to approve the vouchers and claims.

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, and Conry.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Office Hours

Manager Bond reported that the borough will now have daytime hours for Zoning. He is looking to have two hours per day two times per week. France inquired about when a replacement will be made for the position. The manager hasn't received a test date yet. Manager Bond explaining the civil service process of hiring an employee. Cox asked how long it will be before we see hours posted. Manager Bond stated that he will send an email to the employee.

1st Reading

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to approve on first reading Ordinance 2024-01.

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, Musick and Conry.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 1 Brown

Motion passes.

ORDINANCE 2024-01

An Ordinance of the Borough of Washington Amending Section 94-62 entitled, "Signs," and the Downtown Redevelopment Plan Regarding Freestanding Signs on Sidewalks in Certain Zones

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Borough Council seek to revise the regulations concerning freestanding signs on public sidewalks within the commercial zoning districts (B-1, B-2, and Downtown Redevelopment Area) in Washington Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, that the Code of the Borough of Washington be amended as follows:

Section 1. Section 94-62(C)(7) of the Code of the Borough of Washington is hereby amended as follows (additions noted in bold italic **thus** and deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~):

In addition to the foregoing provisions, the following requirements shall apply to signs in the **B-1 Highway Business District and B-2 Central Business District**. Where there is a conflict between the provisions of Subsection C(1) to (6) above and the provisions of this Subsection C(7), the provisions of this subsection shall apply.

Section 2. Section 94-62(C)(7)(d)(1) of the Borough Code regarding freestanding signs certain zones is hereby amended as follows (additions noted in bold italic **thus** and deletions noted in strikethrough ~~thus~~):

(1) **Frees**Standing signs. ~~S~~**Freestanding** signs, that is, moveable “A-frame” or easel ~~other signs designed for and~~ generally placed along a sidewalk or other area intended for the view of pedestrians, shall be permitted, provided that any such sign, **except for “feather signs”**, shall not exceed six square feet in total size per side. **Feather signs may not exceed 12 feet in height and 2.5 feet in width.** The maximum width of such signs shall be 24 inches and the maximum height of such signs shall be 36 inches. The overall height of the sign, including a support frame, shall not exceed 42 inches. The following **additional** limitations shall apply:

[a] Only A-frame, ~~feather or easel frame~~ **and other signs which are designed for, and generally used on sidewalks,** signs are permitted.

[b] No more than one **freestanding** sign shall be permitted for each business and only first-floor businesses may use such signs.

[c] **S****Freestanding signs** may be displayed only during the hours when the business is open.

[d] **S****Freestanding signs shall be constructed of weather resistant materials ~~(no paper, fiberboard, foamcore board, corrugated paper or unfinished wood materials shall be permitted).~~** Signs may be constructed of painted wood, metal or plastic with professional quality painted messages, chalkboards, dry erase boards or boards with changeable letters. No other construction materials are permitted. **S****Freestanding signs shall be constructed and/or weighted so as to be impervious to the effects of strong winds. S****Freestanding signs shall be maintained at all times in good repair and shall not be permitted to weather, fade, peel, crack or otherwise deteriorate.**

[e] **S****Freestanding signs** may be located only adjacent to the building within the side property lines as extended, in an entrance alcove.. **The placement of freestanding signs must allow for at least a 5-foot wide unobstructed pathway.**

[f] No **freestanding** sign shall block pedestrian movement, access to benches, access to parking meters, **fire hydrants**, or access to motor vehicles. The Building or Zoning Officer may direct that any **freestanding** sign which violates this chapter or creates a safety hazard be removed, modified or relocated.

[g] **Only businesses registered with the Borough in accordance with Section 54 of the Borough Code may display a freestanding sign.**

[h] **The business must provide the Borough with proof of insurance with a minimum liability coverage of one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) and must specifically provide coverage**

for the sidewalk area the freestanding sign will be displayed and the Borough must be a named insured on the policy.

[g] Notwithstanding anything contained in this ordinance to the contrary, the Zoning Officer, Fire Marshal, and/or Chief of Police shall have the right to prohibit or further restrict the location of any freestanding sign which, in their sole discretion, they deem by virtue of the freestanding sign's construction or location, to constitute a safety hazard to the public.

Section 3. The Page 40, Signage” of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan is hereby amended to add the following:

Freestanding signs shall be permitted on the public sidewalks in compliance with Borough Code Section 94-62(C)(7)(d)(1)

Section 4. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are repealed as to such inconsistencies.

Section 5. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

Section 6. This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication according to law.

Introduce: January 16, 2024

Public Hearing/Adoption: February 20, 2024

RESOLUTIONS

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adopt Resolutions 2024-27 through 31.
Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, and Conry.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2024-27 A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on October 7, 2021 to FIG CUST FIGNJ19LLC & SEC PTY, PO BOX 669507, DALLAS, TX 75266-9507, in the amount of \$1,306.27 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2020 in the name of MOSCETTI, MARGARET L as supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 33 E CHURCH ST, Block 29 Lot 9, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #21-00023 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify

that on 1/8/2024 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, CORELOGIC claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by FIG CUST FIGNJ19LLC & SEC PTY by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$12,426.29 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #21-00023.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to FIG CUST FIGNJ19LLC & SEC PTY, PO BOX 669507, DALLAS, TX 75266-9507 in the amount of **\$14,926.29** (This consists of \$12,426.29 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$2,500.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 29 Lot 9 from the tax office records.

RESOLUTION 2024-28
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE
As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on October 22, 2020 to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979, in the amount of \$651.18 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2019 in the name of GILBERTSON, RICHARD J & JANE F as supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 53 WASHINGTON SQUARE CIR, Block 73.01 Lot 41, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #20-00032 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 12/22/2023 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, CORELOGIC claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by BALA PARTNERS LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$3,288.28 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #20-00032.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979 in the amount of **\$5,388.28** (This consists of \$3,288.28 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$2,100.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 73.01 Lot 41 from the tax office records.

RESOLUTION 2024-29
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE
As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on November 9, 2023 to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979, in the amount of \$2,654.44 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2022 in the name of HIDDEN GEM INVESTMENTS LLC as supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 74 E CHURCH ST, Block 27.02 Lot 8, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #23-00019 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 1/8/2024 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, JONATHAN FLOREZ claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by BALA PARTNERS LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$4,987.03 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #23-00019.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979 in the amount of **\$17,087.03** (This consists of \$4,987.03 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$12,100.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 27.02 Lot 8 from the tax office records.

RESOLUTION 2024-30
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE
As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on November 9, 2023 to STONEFIELD INVEST.FUND IV,LLC, 1 PARAGON DR, SUITE 252, MONTVALE, NJ 07645, in the amount of \$2,539.63 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2022 in the name of HIDDEN GEM INVESTMENTS LLC as supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 65 SCHOOL ST, Block 28 Lot 5, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #23-00020 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 1/8/2024 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, JONATHAN FLOREZ claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by STONEFIELD INVEST.FUND IV,LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$4,784.05 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #23-00020.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to STONEFIELD INVEST.FUND IV,LLC, 1 PARAGON DR, SUITE 252, MONTVALE, NJ 07645 in the amount of **\$16,584.05** (This consists of \$4,784.05 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$11,800.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 28 Lot 5 from the tax office records.

RESOLUTION 2024-31
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE
As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on November 9, 2023 to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979, in the amount of \$2,714.62 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2022 in the name of FLOREZ, JONATHAN as supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 138 BELVIDERE AVE, Block 30 Lot 6, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #23-00021 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 1/8/2024 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, JONATHAN FLOREZ claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by BALA PARTNERS LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$3,542.18 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #23-00021.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979 in the amount of **\$15,842.18** (This consists of \$3,542.18 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$12,300.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 30 Lot 6 from the tax office records.

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adopt Resolution 2024-32.

Discussion-Infito asked if there is a way for us to make a resolution to pass if amounts are under \$20 without doing it each time and added that he feels that the manager can review and approve. It was advised by Attorney Peterson that these be done by resolution even with smaller amounts for each account.

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infito and Conry.
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0
Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2024-32
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF
VARIANCE ESCROW, FOR THE IMPROVEMENTS TO BLOCK 2.09, LOT 14 (52
Lambert Street) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2.00, HELD IN TRUST BY THE BOROUGH OF
WASHINGTON

WHEREAS, Justine Kubik has requested the release of the Variance Escrow issued for the site improvements to Block 2.09, Lot 2.09 (52 Lambert Street); and

WHEREAS, an inspection of the property has confirmed that the work is satisfactory, and all permits have been closed; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, in the County of Warren, State of New Jersey that the Borough Clerk is authorized to release Variance Escrow in the amount of \$2.00.

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adopt Resolution 2024-33.

Discussion: Gorshkov asked how often they get raises . Manager explaining the salaries. Discussions ensued regarding the increase in percentage for Mayor and Council with Infito pointing out the percentages come out to be 34% for Mayor and 50% increase for Council..

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infito, and Conry.
Ayes: 4 Nays: 2 (Brown and Infito)
Motion passes.

BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON
County of Warren

RESOLUTION 2024-33

WHEREAS, as compensation for their loyal service and devotion to their duties as employees of the Borough of Washington; and

WHEREAS, to recognize their service;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, State of New Jersey that the following salaries and wages are established effective January 1, 2024 unless otherwise noted:

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>2024 SALARY</u>
Borough Manager	\$122,867.50
Chief Financial Officer	\$ 46,559.63
Tax Assessor	\$ 35,733.36
Tax Collector	\$ 76,941.90
Confidential Assistant to the CFO	\$ 70,530.08
Deputy Clerk	\$ 39,749.19
Qualified Purchasing Agent	\$ 6,195.00
Land Use Board Secretary	\$ 5,202.31
Township Council	\$ 4,500.00
Mayor	\$ 5,500.00

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adopt Resolution 2024-34

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, and Conry.
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0
Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2024-34

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING HIRING LAURA APONTE AS AN ACCOUNT CLERK FOR THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT AND AUTHORIZING SALARIES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$47,456.00 FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2024.

WHEREAS, the long-term employee of the Borough retired from the position of the account clerk with the Finance Department, and;

WHEREAS, Laura Aponte interviewed for the vacant position; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Aponte qualifies to fill this position.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Borough Council of the Borough of Washington, Warren County authorizes Borough Manager to hire Ms. Aponte as an account clerk with the starting salary of \$47,456.00.

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adopt Resolution 2024-35.

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, and Conry.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

**BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON
RESOLUTION 2024-35**

WHEREAS, various 2023 bills have been presented for payment this year, which bills represent obligations of the prior fiscal year, and were not covered at the time of transfers between the 2023 budget in the last two months of 2023; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-59 provides that all unexpended balances carried forward after close of the fiscal year are available, until lapsed at the close of the succeeding year, to meet specific claims, commitments or contracts incurred during the preceding fiscal year, and all transfers to be made from unexpended balances to those which are expected to be insufficient during the first three months of the succeeding year:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren, and State of New Jersey that the transfer in the amount of \$38,700.00 be made between the 2023 Budget Appropriation Reserves as follows:

Description	Category	From	To
General Government:			
General Administration	Other Expenses		\$15,000.00
Municipal Clerk	Other Expenses		\$ 2,000.00
Financial Administration	Other Expenses		\$ 500.00
Tax Collector	Other Expenses		\$ 2,000.00
Public Safety			
Police	Other Expenses		\$11,200.00
Judicial			
Public Defender	Other Expenses		\$ 1,000.00
Utilities:			
Electricity	Other Expenses		\$ 5,000.00
Traffic Lights	Other Expenses		\$ 2,000.00
General Government:			
General Administration	Salaries and Wages	\$12,000.00	
Mayor and Council	Salaries and Wages	\$ 7,000.00	
Financial Administration	Salaries and Wages	\$ 4,000.00	
Tax Collector	Salaries and Wages	\$ 7,000.00	
Health Insurance	Other Expenses	\$ 8,700.00	
Total:		\$38,700.00	\$38,700.00

Motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adopt Resolution 2024-36 and 37.

Roll call: Brown, Cox, France, Gorshkov, Infinito, and Conry.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

Motion passes.

RESOLUTION 2023-36
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE
As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on December 7, 2022 to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979, in the amount of \$347.67 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2021 in the name of DOERWANG, MICHAEL T & AMY Las supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 15 E CHURCH ST, Block 24 Lot 1, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #22-00015 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 1/11/2024 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, CORELOGIC claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by BALA PARTNERS LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$1,775.03 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #22-00015.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979 in the amount of **\$3,575.03** (This consists of \$1,775.03 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$1,800.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 24 Lot 1 from the tax office records.

RESOLUTION 2024-37
A RESOLUTION FOR REDEMPTION OF TAX CERTIFICATE
As per N.J.S.A.54:5

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS THAT, WHEREAS, lands in the taxing district of Washington Borough, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, were sold on December 7, 2022 to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979, in the amount of \$734.25 for taxes or other municipal liens assessed for the year 2021 in the name of GRASSO, DEBRA J as supposed owners, and in said assessment and sale were described as 11 E STEWART ST, Block 29 Lot 1, which sale was evidenced by Certificate #22-00021 and

WHEREAS, the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of the Borough of Washington, do certify that on 1/11/2024 and before the right to redeem was cut off, as provided by law, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE claiming to have an interest in said lands, did redeem said lands claimed by BALA PARTNERS LLC by paying the Collector of Taxes of said taxing district of Washington Borough the amount of \$2,561.66 which is the amount necessary to redeem Tax Sale Certificate #22-00021.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on this 16th day of January, 2024 by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Washington, County of Warren to authorize the Treasurer to issue a check payable to BALA PARTNERS LLC, P.O. Box 303, Pottersville, NJ 07979 in the amount of **\$4,861.66** (This consists of \$2,561.66 Certificate Amount redeemed + \$2,300.00 Premium).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is authorized to cancel this lien on Block 29 Lot 1 from the tax office records.

RECAP

Borough Manager Bond recapped the following:

Everyone received a copy of the public works report. The engineers' report came in late and will require it to be submitted the Thursday before meeting in the future. If anyone has questions see him regarding the DPW report. Everyone received the email copy from Kyle Smith the township construction official on the update on 6 Cherry Street and asked how council would like to proceed.

Attorney Peterson stated there is no progress. Manager Bond stated that there is lot more stuff out in the backyard looking like a flea market. Bond recommends that Kyle Smith go out and give him one or two weeks and if not we are forced to take action to take it down. Peterson stated that at this point have DPW do it and charge a lien to the property. Mayor Conry stated to give him a two-week deadline. Brown suggested having DPW go out on the 15th day. The manager stated it would have to be a Monday or a Friday. Manager Bond stated that Feb 2nd it will be scheduled for the DPW to tear down the garage.

Attorney Peterson reported on the structural condition 24 East Washington Avenue. The code officer issued an unsafe structure violation because the building leans. This required the owner to have a structural engineer look at the building. The report came back that the building is structurally sound and referenced historical pictures showing the building has been leaning for quite some time. Inspection inside indicates no signs of shifting. Attorney Peterson stated he will email the reports to council.

Mayor Conry inquired about a building on South Lincoln Avenue that has a tree coming out of the middle of it. Manager Bond stated that he is looking to foreclosure on it. Attorney Peterson stated that this is a tax sale certificate foreclosure. Service by publication may have to be done.

Cox asked about the old gas station across from Artic Foods. Manager Bond stated that they are working to try and get notice to the owners. Two brothers owned it and it was foreclosed on by prior owner. It appears owner may also be incarcerated, making it difficult to contact anyone.

COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilwoman Cox gave the following remarks:

- Thanked everyone for coming out and advised to be careful going back home. Thanked the police officer and stated for him to be safe going home.

Councilman France gave the following remarks:

- Ask if there is any way to have an exploration of inside the theatre . Attorney Peterson stated that we are in litigation with them. Manager Bond explaining what most of the issues are with the theatre. Attorney Peterson added that you have to have a basis to issue an unsafe structure.
- Discussed the application by Mr. Moreno for a cannabis business who was hoping to open. Questions on who to bring this to ensued. France state that the zoning officer misled this person. Attorney Peterson explaining to Mr. France the issue with the redevelopment plan and the use is not permitted where they have their business.

Councilman Infinito gave the following remarks:

- Thanked everyone for coming out and hopes everyone stayed warm and safe during snowstorm. Thanked the DPW workers for the good job with the snow today.
- Discussed the budget process.
- Announced that the Warren County Department of Human Services on Wednesday January 24th from 10-2pm at St Phillips and St James school will hold a project for the homeless and the community. This is an opportunity for those who are homeless to come and meet department heads of the county. A warm meal will be served. If anyone knows of anyone who is in need to let them know.

Councilwoman Gorshkov gave the following statements:

- Thanked everyone for braving the snow and cold weather to come to tonight's meeting.

Mayor Conry gave the following remarks:

- Welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ADJOURN

Hearing no further business to come before Council, motion made by Cox and seconded by Gorshkov to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 PM, all were in favor.

Laurie A. Courter

Laurie A. Courter, RMC
Borough Clerk