

Mayor Fernandes called the meeting to order and requested those present to join her in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Fernandes read the following statement:

"GOOD EVENING LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. THIS MEETING IS NOW CALLED TO ORDER. IN LINE WITH THE BOROUGH OF SEA BRIGHT'S LONGSTANDING POLICY OF OPEN GOVERNMENT, AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE "OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT", I WISH TO ADVISE YOU THAT ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING HAS BEEN PROVIDED ON OCTOBER 28, 2008 IN THE HUB/ATLANTICVILLE, ASBURY PARK PRESS, TWO RIVER TIMES, THE COURIER, AND THE LINK. THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE BOROUGH OFFICE. IN EACH INSTANCE, THE DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF THIS MEETING WERE PROVIDED IN THE NOTICE. THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC."

3. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Councilmembers Bills, Long, Keeler, Kelly, Markson, Scriven, Mayor Fernandes, Attorney Arnette, Borough Clerk Smeltzer

ABSENT: None

4. DISCUSSION - Mayor Fernandes - 3 CHURCH STREET ACQUISITION -

Mayor Fernandes thanked everyone for attending the special workshop. She has received numerous phone calls from residents who were given false information regarding the possible purchase of 3 Church Street a/k/a the Tapestry Building.

Mayor Fernandes said that 3 Church Street was not a done deal and tonight's discussion would begin by introducing the facts and setting the record straight. The Police Headquarters would not occupy 3 Church Street only Borough offices and there will not be delivery trucks during all hours of the night. Council meetings and court operations would remain at 1167 Ocean Avenue. The court trailer would be abolished and relocated to the current Borough Hall location. There is sufficient parking in the municipal parking lots located on the east side of Ocean Avenue right across from Church Street.

Mayor Fernandes said that during a Smart Growth Workshop this year, it was recommended and the Council agreed, to refrain from building a new Borough Hall on the municipal parking lots, which is "prime real estate", located on the east side of Ocean Avenue.

She said that although Church Street floods sometimes 3 Church Street is not a severely flood prone area and water rarely reaches the building. Most of the Borough's operations would be located on the second floor. This building would not come at a hefty cost of over \$1 Million dollars before necessary renovations. Moreover, the Borough Council has not acted "with total disregard for the quality of life for the homeowners who live on this street".

She said that back in the early 1990s, the Borough Council decided to house the court employees in the temporary trailer which became a band-aid fix. The consideration to purchase 3 Church Street has been the first suggestion throughout the approximately 15 or so years to receive bi-partisan approval, which was voted on by all the council members seated here today both Democrats and Republicans. Mayor Fernandes said that not

once did she have to break a tie vote on this issue. The existing Borough Hall is entirely too small. The Borough of Sea Bright has been in violation of the Superior Court of NJ's directive for many years and an embarrassment to the Judiciary. Also, the Borough is in violation of State statute that mandates both tax collector and the registrar have private offices.

Years ago, Borough Hall was located in the Police Headquarters said Mayor Fernandes and when that became overcrowded Borough Hall was moved to its current location. Councilman Doug Adair was on the Governing Body then and spoke out against this move because this building was dedicated as a community center for residents, children and seniors. His recommendation was to build a Borough Hall and instead the Council chose a band-aid fix.

She said that on October 28, 2008, Judge Lawson addressed a letter to her and Borough Attorney Arnette advising Sea Bright that they need have a decision to either purchase 3 Church Street or have a firm alternate plan to resolve the court deficiencies by December 31, 2008. If we do not comply then Sea Bright Court would be placed on "Emergency" status. This means that Borough of Sea Bright will be responsible for continuing to pay all the expenses to operate the court, such as salaries, benefits, overhead expenses, etc., but the Superior Court of NJ will collect all of our revenue, which in 2008 we anticipated \$210,000. Sea Bright cannot afford to lose this revenue without serious ramifications that could adversely affect the quality of life for all Sea Brighters.

Mayor Fernandes said that in the late 1970s, when Sea Bright's Elementary School closed the Council had the opportunity purchase the school building for \$1. Because closing the school became such a highly emotional issue the purchase never transpired. The decision to not purchase the old school for \$1 was a foolish decision based on emotions instead of considering the future benefits for the Borough. Let us not let history repeat itself.

Tonight the Council will offer you some insight as to where we are and where we need to go. Decisions will not be made at this workshop or during the council meeting that follows. Whatever the outcome some individuals will be upset and others will be pleased. The Governing Body has a responsibility to decide what is in the best interests of the Borough. She asked the Council to bring to the December 2 Council meeting either a firm resolve to purchase 3 Church Street or an alternate plan that satisfies all of the Borough office and court deficiencies and requirements. This plan must be fiscally sound, based on good business practices and not on emotions and please no more band-aid fixes.

Councilman Kelly said that the Smart Growth plans have considered many options concerning a Borough facility. We will discuss all aspects concerning the acquisition of 3 Church Street and a plan which involves the existing Borough facility renovation.

Councilwoman Long said that Sea Bright is facing the potential closing of the court on December 31, 2008 which means there would be no more court revenue. Sea Bright's courtroom is in compliance with a court mandated security plan and could be a host in a lease agreement if the court office was to be in the current Borough facility.

Leasing the first floor at 3 Church Street as office space could offset some of the debt revenue said Councilwoman Long. The only cost required is for ADA accessibility. Those costs would be between \$75,000 and \$125,000. For every million dollars

borrowed, taxpayers can expect anywhere from \$67 to \$100 added to their property taxes.

In 2007, we spent over \$59,000 towards building maintenance and utility costs and 3 Church Street would be added as an additional facility with the possibility of \$11,000 for those costs.

Councilwoman Long said that the first Smart Growth recommendation was to renovate Borough Hall and create offices in the gym for a cost of \$547,800. Next idea was to add an addition to the current Borough building and possibly a second floor for about 1.9 million. Then another plan was presented for a new 7500 square feet facility costing over 2.4 million.

Councilman Scriven said that the first part of the Beach plan would include a Lifeguard station located behind the Police station. It would be a multi-story structure and the ground level would be for equipment storage, lockers and restrooms. A luncheonette would be available for leasing to generate revenue. On the second floor there would be a restaurant for leasing for additional revenue. As part of the facility there would be a cell tower which would generate revenue.

Councilman Scriven said that another part of the plan was to build an area at the far end of the beach to include, a pool, lockers, restrooms, facilities, rental equipment services which would be the main revenue of the town. The benefits would be that pool membership money would be upfront and with a fixed budget. A year round pool would not be feasible because of maintenance costs and many schools don't have swim teams. A seasonal pool would be a better plan. The pool revenue would be for a utility because we are not allowed to run it as a relief for the general fund.

Councilman Keeler said that years ago there was an major effort to acquire the Allied property next to Borough Hall. Then we looked into a land swap with Allied but this failed due to DEP restrictions.

Councilman Keeler said that he would rather keep Borough Hall at its current location and add an addition. He said that 3 Church Street is located in low ground and during the 1992 Storm Church Street it was under water and Borough Hall was dry. He said that moving Borough Hall to a residential area would pose a quality of life issue by bringing more activity to that neighborhood. Also, it is a dead-end street so every car has to turn around to come out into Ocean Avenue. There is little parking on Church Street. The first floor has limited usefulness and anything of substance could not be put in. The open floor office layout and it being a bi-level is not sufficient operation for a Municipal complex. There is no emergency back up generator but the current building does and this is essential. He said that to get the property going would cost the town about 1.3 million. There would be overall increase to the town in utilities, maintenance, insurance as the building would be added to our policy.

Councilman Keeler said that the pool is imperative to generate revenue for the town. The Public Safety Complex needs to be addressed. The Police and First Aid share a building which is in bad shape. The Fire House is in better shape and needs some renovations but fire trucks are larger than years ago and it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate the fire trucks with personnel in and out of the Fire House. He said that there were many future capital projects that would incur debt to the Borough: new Police building, Public Works' vehicles and equipment storage facility, maintenance and repairs to a 40 year old sanitary sewer system, replacement of fire pump truck

Linda Bray of 42 Church Street said that she opposed acquisition of 3 Church Street and expanding Borough Hall. She said that we need revenue.

Andrew Mencinsky of Ocean Avenue said renovating current Borough Hall most likely would exceed the \$100,000 to \$300,000 estimated costs. The Church Street property is zoned whereby there could be a nightclub there.

Jill Jakes of 12 South Street said that she is concerned with the economics of this especially during these hard financial times.

Read Murphy of 6 Center Street said that he does not think renovating the existing Borough Hall facility to include the court would come close to \$300,000 and it could be done quickly within months instead of years. The only thing that would slow us down is bid process and bonding. He said that he spoke with court officials and they would not be taking Sea Bright's court revenue but would be held in escrow as we hold court in another town and those revenues would be held until we mitigate our situation here.

Mayor Fernandes said that Judge Lawson would have court monies ceased and held in a non-interest bearing account. CAFRA approval is required because an extension of the building toward the east requires this. The Library addition was extended to the south and did not require approval because it was not closer to the ocean. The Library was privately funded and public bidding was not required. Public bidding requires a lot of legal and statutory requirements.

Councilwoman Markson said that the court trailer is not on a foot print and would require CAFRA approval.

Drew Miller of Church Street said that renovating the current Borough facility would be cost effective and allow the courts' revenue remain in the town

Nancy DeScenza said of 498 Ocean Avenue said the acquisition of Church Street would be an additional liability because of crossing Ocean Avenue and it is the largest drop off of children at this school bus stop.

Betty Steffer of 1187 Ocean Avenue said that 3 Church Street is a beautiful building.

Joan Osgoodby of Islandview Way said that she supports expanding the current building. The recreation center is only used by people out of town. The building was dedicated when there was a school in town.

Chris Doxey of 9 Church Street said that she opposed the purchase 3 Church Street or any other parcel of land for the purpose of Borough Hall. The quality of life would be affected regarding losing parking spaces.

Marianne McKenzie of Ocean Avenue objected to buying real estate during this market because it would prove foolhardy.

Cori Socher of 1382 Ocean Avenue said that the town need this facility.

Will Cherry of 1144 Ocean Avenue said that the current Borough Hall should be torn down and built with underground parking.

Richard MacMillan of 9 Church Street said that we should be financially prudent.

Jo-Ann Kalaka-Adams said that this was not a good plan and did not want to have additional tax.

There being no further business before the Governing Body. Councilwoman Bills made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 P.M. Second by Councilwoman Markson and approved upon unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryann M. Smeltzer, RMC
Municipal Clerk