

THE MEETING OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON COMMON COUNCIL, COUNTY OF BURLINGTON, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023, AT 7:00 PM, IN THE CITY HALL, 525 HIGH STREET, BURLINGTON, NJ, PURSUANT TO THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT.

The Municipal Clerk advised the public of the location of the two fire exits: one on the left after exiting the Council Chamber and the other being the entrance to the building.

The following notice of the meeting was sent:

There will be a Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Burlington held on December 12, 2023, at 7:00 PM, prevailing time at the City Hall Building, 525 High Street, Burlington, N.J. 08016.

Cindy A. Crivaro, RMC  
Municipal Clerk

Governing Body Members present: Dave Ballard, Dawn Bergner-Thompson, George Chachis, Xavier Roque, Roosevelt Smith, Suzanne Woodard.

Absent: Dave Babula.

Also present: Mayor Barry Conaway, Administrator Johanna Conyer, Dean Ciminera, Finance Consultant, Municipal Attorney Justin Strausser, Director of Housing Bill Harris, Director of Public Works Bill Curry, Police Lt. Elbertson.

### **SALUTE TO FLAG**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Council President Chachis announced the Swearing-In Ceremony of the 2024 Re-Elected and Newly Elected Officials will take place on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

On behalf of the Street Cleaning Committee (Councilman Smith, Councilwoman Woodard & Councilman Ballard), Councilman Smith recommended a Street Cleaning PILOT Program for High, Broad and Federal Streets. It was seconded by Councilman Roque. All were in favor.

### **EXPLANATION OF RESOLUTIONS**

Johanna Conyer, Administrator 278-2023, 279-2023, 280-2023

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Phil Augustyn, 307 High Street – thanked the Street Cleaning Committee for initiating a PILOT Program; spoke of trash piled up on a porch at High and E. Federal Street; wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Donna Mazzola, 12 W. Pearl Street – spoke of businesses in town suffering, vacant buildings and the effect on new business owners and investors.

Harry Heck, 116 E. Union Street – thanked the Public Works Department and the Garden Club; spoke of the appearance of the City, trash cans in yards, some overflowing; spoke of previous discussions to move the bus stop from the former Hulse building to across the street from City Hall; asked the City to reconsider; suggested offering an incentive to landlords to rent their buildings; enforce trash pick-up; provided an article regarding cats and rabies cases; reported a feral cat feeding problem at the former Home for Aged Women; wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Tom Swan, 305 E. Union Street – spoke as a member of Main Street Burlington; asked for the City’s support; suggested to review old ordinances that would help promote businesses in town and increase traffic; suggested to create an incentive for businesses to come to town; suggested better Code Enforcement; wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Suzanne Gallagher, 415 Locust Avenue – thanked Council President Chachis for responding to her email; kudos to Bill Curry and the Public Works Department; spoke of a Street Sweeping Program; spoke of an inventory conducted of empty storefronts; provided documents: 2023 Graphic View of Vacant and Tax Lien Properties on High and Union Streets; suggested offering incentives to landlords and corporations; wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Christine Donahue, 140 W. Broad Street – spoke in support of Main Street Burlington; the atmosphere needs to be inviting; spoke of concerns with the Burlington City Fire Trucks being used for non-emergencies; it is nostalgic and non-inclusive; suggested a more cost-effective way such as participation in the Holiday parade.

Janice Jaskol, 112 Linden Avenue, Delran – spoke of vacant buildings and stores; trash in town; spoke of four cannabis dispensaries in her town attracting people and business; wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Rudy Smith, 205 W. Federal Street – asked Council to support Main Street Burlington; spoke of experiencing many road blocks when improving a property.

Claudine Conaway, 110 James Street – spoke of three main landlords in town; suggested inviting the landlords to a Council meeting; write them a letter telling them how they are hurting the City.

Erika Jones, Business Owner of 325 High Street – spoke of businesses struggling; lack of traffic; suggested businesses need to be open on weekends; the requirements to move into a building are absurd.

Seigha Omuso, 233 W. Union Street – asked how citizens can collaborate with City Administration; spoke of vacant properties, fees and fines; what can be done to encourage owners to do something with their property; spoke of exploring changes; the end of High Street gets very dark at night time.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Councilman Smith moved that all Consent Agenda items be approved. It was seconded by Councilman Roque. All were in favor.

**APPROVAL OF INVOICES\***

Approved by Consent Agenda. All were in favor.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES\***

Approved by Consent Agenda. All were in favor.

**RESOLUTIONS / CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS\***

Resolution No. 278-2023

RESOLUTION NO. 278-2023 OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BURLINGTON TO APPLY TO THE BURLINGTON COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT TO SUPPORT THE COST OF RENOVATING THE WILLIAM R. ALLEN SCHOOL

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Burlington (hereafter referred to as the “City”) is in need of funding to complete the restoration of the historic William R. Allen School; and

WHEREAS, the City has entered into a three-year agreement with the Burlington County Office of Community Office to participate in the County’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program; and

WHEREAS, the City requires \$394,399 in CDBG funds to supplement the other sources of funds which have been awarded to the City for the completing the estimated \$1,917,200 project; and

WHEREAS, the use of CDBG funding for the restoration of the William R. Allen School is an eligible activity under CDBG regulations as a benefit to low-income City residents; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Burlington does hereby authorizes the Mayor to submit an application to and to execute a contract with the Burlington County Office of Community Office for the use of CDBG funds for the restoration of the historic William R. Allen School.

Upon the motion of Councilwoman Woodard, seconded by Councilman Smith, the foregoing resolution was adopted by the following roll call vote: AYES: Mr. Ballard, Ms. Bergner-Thompson, Mr. Chachis, Mr. Smith, Ms. Woodard. (5); NAYS: (0); ABSTAIN: Mr. Roque. (1); ABSENT: Mr. Babula. (1).

Resolution No. 279-2023

RESOLUTION NO. 279-2023 OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON AUTHORIZING ASSIGNMENT OF TAX SALE CERTIFICATES TO COOPER SQUARE ACQUISITIONS REAL ESTATE INVESTORS BY WAY OF PRIVATE SALE AS AUTHORIZED UNDER N.J.S.A 54:5-112 AND RESOLUTION NO. 246-2023 OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A.54: 5-113 authorizes assignment by a municipality of tax sale certificates for the full amount of the certificate by way of private sale as authorized under Resolution # 246-2023 of the Common Council of the City of Burlington, including all subsequent municipal taxes and other municipal charges authorizing the Tax Collector to assign municipal lien certificates of the following properties: Block 139 Lot 24, Block 140 Lot 14, Block 139 Lot 12, Block 141 Lot 25 Block 141 Lot 34, Block 151 Lot 7, Block 150 Lot 30, Block 195 Lot 13.01; and

WHEREAS, Cooper Square Acquisitions Real Estate Investors has presented an offer to purchase for the full amounts of the Certificates of Sale as listed below, by assignment which were issued to the City of Burlington being the full amounts of the Certificates, including all subsequent taxes and other municipal charges.

1. No. 20-00062, for the property located at 548 York Street, also known as Block 139, Lot 24 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023, of \$17,757.93.78**, owner Dunaisky, Y &E, Prop Mgmt of Burl Co. (Date of Tax Sale: November 24, 2020) amount to redeem lien \$ 17,757.93.
2. No. 17-00057, for the property located at 511 York Street, also known as Block 140, Lot 14 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023 of \$46,444.10**, owner Carlos Thompson, et al. (Date of Tax Sale: November 21, 2017)
3. No. 18-00040, for the property located at 522 York Street, also known as Block 139, Lot 12 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023 of \$29,625.46**, owner Beverly C & Andrew K Wilson. (Date of Tax Sale: November 20, 2018)
4. No. 18-00044, for the property located at 315 Jones Avenue, also known as Block 141, Lot 25 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023, of \$39,164.91**, owner Caren L. Nires. (Date of Tax Sale: November 20, 2018)
5. No. 17-00063, for the property located at 337 Jones Avenue, also known as Block 141, Lot 34 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023 of \$31,680.47** owner Rack Enterprises, LLC. (Date of Tax Sale: November 21, 2017)
6. No. 18-00050, for the property located at 416 Jones Avenue, also known as Block 151, Lot 7 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023, of \$36,47.19**, owner Richard C. Gross (Date of Tax Sale: November 20, 2018)

7. No. 18-00048, for the property located at 518 Linden Avenue, also known as Block 150, Lot 30 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023, of \$26,493.83**, owner Ethel Mason and Russelena Mccloud (Date of Tax Sale: November 20, 2018)
8. No. 19-00096, for the property located at 516 Columbus Road, also known as Block 195, Lot 13.01 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Burlington, total for redemption as of **December 12, 2023, of \$34,491.51**, owner Kessler Capital Mgmt, LLC. (Date of Tax Sale: November 26, 2019)

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Burlington hereby authorizes the Tax Collector and Municipal Clerk to execute the necessary assignment documents to effect assignment of the above referenced Certificates of Sale.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Tax Collector.

Upon the motion of Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Ballard, the foregoing resolution was adopted by the following roll call vote: AYES: Mr. Ballard, Ms. Bergner-Thompson, Mr. Chachis, Mr. Roque, Mr. Smith, Ms. Woodard. (6); NAYS: (0); ABSTAIN: (0); ABSENT: Mr. Babula. (1).

Resolution No. 280-2023 See attachment.

Upon the motion of Councilwoman Woodard, seconded by Councilman Smith, the foregoing resolution was adopted by the following roll call vote: AYES: Mr. Ballard, Ms. Bergner-Thompson, Mr. Chachis, Mr. Roque, Mr. Smith, Ms. Woodard. (6); NAYS: (0); ABSTAIN: (0); ABSENT: Mr. Babula. (1).

#### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Smith spoke of limited business participation; spoke of visitors from Newark and the need for incentives for businesses; thanked everyone from Main Street for attending the meeting this evening; wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Council President Chachis thanked Councilman Babula for his years of service; asked for the status of the installation of a speed sign.

Mr. Curry indicated it could possibly be placed by January.

Mayor Conaway wished everyone Happy Holidays; thanked Councilman Babula for his years of service on Council.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon the motion of Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Woodard, this meeting of December 12, 2023, was adjourned.

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Cindy A. Crivaro, RMC  
Municipal Clerk