



TOWN OF DOVER MAYOR & BOARD OF ALDERMEN

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Electronic Meeting /

Dover Municipal Building

37 N. Sussex Street Dover NJ, 07801

October 13, 2020 7:00 P.M.

Mayor Carolyn Blackman called the October 13, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen to order at 7:09p.m. and read the Sunshine Statement that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, also known as the Sunshine Law, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6. Notice of the meeting was sent to the Daily Record and Star Ledger on October 1, 2020 and published in the Record and Ledger on October 5, 2020. Notice was also posted on the Bulletin Board and entrance doors of Town Hall.”

The Mayor then led those in attendance in the salute to the flag.

It was announced that the meeting was being recorded by Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt.

Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt then conducted the roll which resulted in the following:

Name	Present	Absent	Excused
Alderman Correa	X		
Alderman Tapia	X		
Alderman Ballesteros	X		
Alderwoman Rugg		X	
Alderwoman Cruz	X		
Alderman Valencia	X		
Alderman Quinones	X		
Alderwoman Wittner	X		
Mayor Blackman	X		

It was announced that eight members were present and there was a quorum.

Also in attendance was Interim Business Administrator John O. Bennett, Acting Municipal Clerk John P. Schmidt, Deputy Municipal Clerk Rey Julve, Municipal Attorney Tim Downs, Interim CFO John Gross, William J. Isselin, Chief Code Enforcement Officer and Asst. Engineer and Fire Chief Jon Filosa.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board then acted upon approval of meeting minutes. Aldermember Wittner made a motion to adopt the August 25, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes, second by Aldermember Cruz. The Clerk then conducted roll-call.

August 25, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion								X	
Second					X				
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

The August 25, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes were adopted 8-0.

PRESENTATIONS, MUNICIPAL CORRESPONDENCE

Thomas J. Kratz was introduced by Chief Filosa and Mayor Blackman. He was accompanied by his family and was administered the oath of office by Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt as a Fire Fighter in the Town of Dover. Following the oath of office, Mayor Blackman welcomed Firefighter Kratz.

Following the Oath of Office Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt gave a presentation concerning Online Transparency. He explained that in the past few weeks the Clerk's Office has been posting documents on the Town Code site which has the ability to host Ordinances, Resolutions, Minutes, Final Documents and other government documents. He explained how this resource could be utilized to more easily find and search various documents and would allow for posting of information of not just the Town and Board of Aldermen but all Boards and Commissions. Alderwoman Wittner asked if agendas would still be posted on the website for those who were used to it. There was a discussion and it was mentioned that the agendas could be posted in both places and possibly an announcement could be posted as to where to find the approved documents or revisions.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

The Board considered Ord. 23-2020 – Ordinance of the Town of Dover, County of Morris, State of New Jersey Amending Chapter 236 of the Code of the Town of Dover Regulating the Size of Wall Signs in the Town of Dover. Aldermember Wittner made a motion to introduce, seconded by Aldermember Correa.

Introduction of Ord. 23-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion								X	
Second	X								
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

The Ordinance was introduced 8-0.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING, PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

The Board then considered Ordinances for Adoption.

Ord. 20-2020 – Ordinance of the Town of Dover, County of Morris, State of New Jersey
Creating a New Chapter of the Code of the Town of Dover entitled the Open Government –
Transparency and Participation Act.

The Board by unanimous consent without objection opened the public hearing with the following in favor: Aldermembers Correa, Tapia, Ballesteros, Cruz, Valencia, Quinones, Wittner and Mayor Blackman.

With no one wishing to address the Board, the Board by unanimous consent closed the public hearing with the following in favor: Aldermembers Correa, Tapia, Ballesteros, Cruz, Valencia, Quinones, Wittner and Mayor Blackman.

Aldermember Correa spoke about the history of this Ordinance which brought us to tonight. He also thanked Aldermember Wittner who proposed this Ordinance last year to the former Administration which was refused. Aldermember Correa stated that Ord. 20-2020 is a start. The original Ordinance was roughly 25 pages and tonight's Ordinance is roughly six to seven pages. It was stated that parts of the other Ordinance he hopes could be adopted later this year or next year sometime. He spoke of the importance of placing the check book of the Town, also called the PO report online and commented that Dover may be the first Town in the state do this. He also spoke about the Conflicts of Interest Disclosure. Aldermember Correa stated that this Ordinance is a great movement forward with transparency. He stated that he is voting for this legislation which will not just make history in Dover but in New Jersey.

Aldermember Ballesteros asked a question about the Conflicts of Interest Disclosure and if it was updated from what was done earlier in the year. Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt said that this is separate from the Financial Disclosure Statement required by DCA. Mr. Schmidt stated that Dover's Disclosure goes beyond DCA. Aldermember Ballesteros asked if the Board would provide retroactive Disclosures for this year. Acting Municipal Clerk said he would defer to Municipal Attorney Downs but believes it is moving forward next year. Attorney Downs stated that he does not recall the Ordinance being retroactive but he believes it is prospective from the date it becomes effective.

Aldermember Correa had made a motion to adopt, second by Aldermember Cruz.

Adoption of Ord. 20-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion	X								
Second					X				
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

Ordinance 20-2020 was adopted 8-0.

The Board then considered Ord. 21-2020 – Bond Ordinance of the Town of Dover, County of Morris, State of New Jersey Re-Appropriating \$2,500,000 Proceeds of Obligations Not Needed for their Original Purpose in Order to Provide for Various Capital Projects in and by the Town of Dover, In the County of Morris, State of New Jersey.

Aldermember Ballesteros made a motion to open the public hearing for Ord. 21-2020, second by Aldermember Cruz.

Open the Public Hearing for Ord. 21-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion			X						
Second					X				
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

On a vote of 8-0 the public hearing was opened.

Aldermember Ballesteros asked if he could bring up public comments he received or should he wait to Aldermen comments on this Ordinance. Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt stated that he would need the name and address of public speakers. Aldermemeber Ballesteros stated he would wait to Aldermember comments.

With no one wishing to address the governing body, Aldermember Wittner, second by Aldermember Correa made a motion to close to the public hearing.

Close the Public Hearing for Ord. 21-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion								X	
Second	X								
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

On a vote of 8-0, the floor was closed to the public.

Aldermember Wittner wanted to clarify that the Capital Projects were already requested and put in. Administrator Bennett explained that the monies were already appropriated and is being re-appropriated for other projects. It was clarified that this is not new debt.

Aldermember Ballesteros spoke about an email he received. He wanted to clarify that this is not necessarily found money and commented that the member of the public wanted to know why this money could not be given back to the public. Administrator Bennett explained that some of these expenses need to be done, which would have required the Board to approve new debt.

Instead the Town is re-appropriating existing monies and used other monies to pay down the debt, which saves the taxpayers money. Aldermember Ballesteros asked if by doing this, does this help to balance the budget for next year. Administrator Bennett said it does not really help, except that by doing this, the Town would not have an additional increase in debt service.

Aldermember Correa had a question concerning for Mr. Isselin and wanted to know what roads were included in this bond Ordinance. Mr. Isselin explained he has about \$2 Million worth of projects, which totals twelve roadways. He stated that the monies in the Ordinance cover about 40% of those projects. Mr. Isselin stated that during the winter he will have to meet with the Administrator and Mayor to select projects which would start in the Spring of 2021.

Aldermember Cruz made a motion to adopt the Ordinance, second by Aldermember Quinones.

Adoption of Ord. 21-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion	X								
Second					X				
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

Ord. 21-2020 was adopted 8-0.

The Board then considered Ord. 22-2020 – Ordinance of the Town of Dover, County of Morris, State of New Jersey Modifying Rates of Compensation for Law Enforcement Officers Performing Off-Duty Work.

The Board by unanimous consent without objection opened the public hearing with the following in favor: Aldermembers Correa, Tapia, Ballesteros, Cruz, Valencia, Quinones, Wittner and Mayor Blackman.

With no one wishing to address the Board, the Board by unanimous consent closed the public hearing with the following in favor: Aldermembers Correa, Tapia, Ballesteros, Cruz, Valencia, Quinones, Wittner and Mayor Blackman.

Aldermember Wittner wanted to clarify that this Ordinance is to fulfill the Town's obligations under the Union Collective Bargaining Agreement and that this is no cost to the taxpayers. It was stated that this is correct.

Aldermember Wittner made a motion to adopt, second by Aldermember Ballesteros.

Adoption of Ord. 22-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion								X	
Second			X						
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

Ordinance 22-2020 was adopted 8-0.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

The Board then considered the Approval of the Bills List (Res. 236-2020). Aldermember Ballesteros made a motion to adopt Res. 236-2020/Bills List, second by Aldermember Correa.

Res. 236-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion			X						
Second	X								
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

Res. 236-2020 was adopted 8-0.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

The Board then considered resolutions on the agenda. There was a request to separate out Resolution 238 from the consent agenda of which there were two resolutions so each resolution was voted upon separately. The first resolution was Res. 237-2020 – Resolution Approving a Mobile Retail Food Establishment Class II. A motion was made by Aldermember Wittner to adopt the resolution, second by Aldermember Cruz.

Res. 237-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion								X	
Second					X				
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

Res. 237-2020 was adopted 8-0.

The Board then acted upon the Res. 238-2020 – Resolution Approving Taxis/Limos Licensed in the Town of Dover. A motion was made by Aldermember Ballesteros, second by Aldermember Wittner.

Res. 238-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion			X						
Second								X	
Yes		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain	X								

Res. 238-2020 was adopted 7-0-1.

RESOLUTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION

The Board then considered Res. 239-2020 – Resolution Supporting the Renaming of the East Blackwell Street Bridge in Honor of Rep. John Lewis. Mayor Blackman spoke about the resolution. She first apologized for the misprint that was put out. The Mayor stated that the Salem Street is not being renamed as it was already named in honor of former Police Officer Art Ohlsen. The Bridge that is being renamed is the East Blackwell Street Bridge which is currently under construction. This was also confirmed by Mr. Isselin.

Hearing no other comments, Mayor Blackman asked for a motion and a second. A motion was made by Aldermember Cruz, second by Aldermember Wittner.

Resolution 239-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion					X				
Second								X	
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

Res. 239-2020 was adopted 8-0.

The Board then considered Res. 240-2020 – Resolution Establishing Procedures for Public Comments for Meetings Held During COVID-19. Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt explained that the Local Finance Board released a Local Finance Notice concerning requirements for meetings held during COVID-19. Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt explained that Local Finance Notice and explained that the procedures adopted by a public body had to be memorialized in a resolution.

Aldermember Wittner asked why 1:00p.m. was chosen for the cut off time for comments submitted electronically. Acting Municipal Clerk explained the reasons. One of the reasons

being was for organization and ease. Aldermember Wittner asked if the Board could discuss allowing comments to be emailed until the close of business on meeting days.

Mayor Blackman stated that in her opinion 4:30p.m. may be too late. She stated that sometimes a lot of things occur between 4:00-7:00 and could create a lot of work in a short amount of time.

Aldermember Wittner then asked what time does the mail come usually. Deputy Municipal Clerk Julve stated that it usually comes early. Aldermember Ballesteros asked if the meetings would also include Zoom. He stated that as long as the Resolution contained Zoom he is okay with the Resolution.

Aldermember Correa asked if the public could also come to the meetings. Acting Municipal Clerk stated that if the Board meets in person then the public could attend. Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt explained that he consulted with the Health Officer and the meeting room was marked out for social distancing procedures. Acting Municipal Clerk clarified the ways comments could be made: In writing (by email, by mail or in writing by dropping off comments), in person, by phone and by Zoom.

A discussion was held concerning occupancy and social distancing guidelines.

Hearing no other discussion, a motion was made by Aldermember Quinones to adopt the resolution, second by Aldermember Cruz.

Resolution 240-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion							X		
Second					X				
Yes	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Blackman provided an update on the Census and stated that the deadline was been extended and encouraged everyone to respond to the Census. Currently the State of New Jersey is at 69.3% and Dover is at 72.4%. The Mayor said while we are doing well there is time to do better.

Mayor Blackman also updated the community about an upcoming Flu Clinic hosted by ZuFall which will be at St. John's Church. The Mayor also provided an update about the Drop off box for ballots. The Mayor stated that the box is should be delivered next Monday and that currently there are 15 drop boxes in the County with the closest being in Wharton and Rockaway. Mayor Blackman encouraged everyone to vote.

Mayor Blackman also reminded everyone to mask up and to wear masks when out. She reminded everyone that we are still in a pandemic and that everyone has to take things seriously.

The Mayor also announced that after consultation with the Town's insurance carrier, the Town will not be doing a traditional Halloween event like past years but are providing guidance to individuals who plan to go out on Halloween. Mayor Blackman did announce that the Town would be having a Halloween door decorating contest and the winners in each ward would receive a ShopRite gift card.

The Mayor also discussed property tax increases. Mayor Blackman stated that the increases this year were not taken lightly and the last thing that the Mayor and Board want to do is raise taxes. The Mayor did comment that the Mayor and Board this year had to work with what they inherited. She stated that as a result of COVID-19 the Town has seen a reduction in revenues from court fees, licenses, permits and other fees. Mayor Blackman also stated that the Town had CBA increases, a \$386,000 increase from RVRSA, increased insurance premiums and debt service. The Mayor also stated that the Town had been paying employees to stay to home and not to work and that will stop. Mayor Blackman stated all of this created a ripple effect.

Mayor Blackman also commented that if a senior citizen does not see a freeze on the tax bills, they can call Town Hall. Mayor Blackman asked the CFO to explain the tax bills. Mr. Gross stated that the tax bill is broken into five areas: County Tax, County Open Space Tax, Library Tax, School Tax and Municipal Tax. He stated that less than half of the tax bill goes to Municipal Services and gave an explanation. He also stated that the Mayor has instructed the Finance Office to begin work on the 2021 budget and is looking at all items.

Aldermember Correa asked what the average tax bill is and what the breakdown was. Mr. Gross stated that the average assessed home was \$238,653 and property owners saw an increase of \$282 per year. The rough breakdown is \$23 for the County, \$0.58 for County Open Space, \$53.25 for School Tax, \$3.58 Library Tax and Municipal Tax was \$202. Overall for the year the tax break down on an average home would be \$6,789 and is roughly broken down: \$3,100 for Municipal, \$88 Library, \$2,900 School, \$20 County Open Space and \$670 for County taxes.

Interim Administrator Bennett then provided a report. He stated that he has been establishing priorities and continues to work on team building with Department Heads and various labor unions. He reported that he met with both the Water Commission and Fire Department, held a meeting with the Town's consultants concerning Cybersecurity. Some of the proposals will be implemented while others will involve planning.

He provided an update about establishing a more economical and more responsive alternatives to the current structure in the Health Department. Mr. Bennett also reported that in reviewing expenditures he is working to make sure there is a contract legally entered into which supports head payment.

Mr. Bennett reported that he held a meeting with our Risk Manager and reported that the Town received an additional \$378,828 refund on the Town's health premiums. This was on top of the check previously received and exceeds the \$400,000 which the Town anticipated on receiving. He stated that these monies will greatly assist the efforts to this year's budget and the inclusion in surplus for the next year.

Mr. Bennett also reported on other events and meetings including a meeting with NJ Transit at the Train Station. He reported that the Town has established a working relationship with them and are not going to back down on demands that the area be cleaned and maintained. He also had a meeting with the School Superintendent to discuss SRO in the schools and other additional areas for shared services. Mr. Bennett also stated that the Town was informed by the Governor's office that the Town is eligible for CARES money in the amount of \$334,000 and that the Town will be preparing the documentation for reimbursement for those items which are directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic and expenses the Town has incurred to date.

Acting Municipal Clerk then commented about voting. He encouraged everyone to vote early by the ballots they received in the mail. Mr. Schmidt did say that there would be one consolidated voting place at Sacred Heart but that the easiest way to vote is to return the ballots which were sent out. He also asked people to not place ballots in the black tax/water payment drop off box.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt read the procedures for public comment and the meeting was opened to the public.

Speaker: Susan Shauer

Address: 346 W. Clinton Street, Dover NJ

Municipality/County: Town of Dover / Morris County

Ms. Shauer commented that she did not know that the public was able to attend. She also commented about Zoom and that sometimes people were on mute and that people could not be heard when making a motion or second. Ms. Shauer also spoke about the Bridge and asked if the Bridge currently had a name and the renaming Bridge.

Acting Municipal Clerk responded the comment about not being able to hear a motion or second. Mr. Schmidt stated that the members of the Board were on mute and that is why he repeated all of the votes in case they were not picked up on audio and to prevent echoes. He also stated that the meeting notice was advertised and posted on the door of the Municipal Building by the side public entrance next to the window.

Speaker: Thea Czachorowski

Address: 38 Linwood Ave., Dover NJ

Municipality/County: Town of Dover / Morris County

Ms. Czachorowski commented about the Salem Street Bridge in honor of John Lewis. She mentioned that it is already dedicated after a deceased Police Officer in Dover. She also stated she heard that the bridge to be renamed may be the Blackwell Street Bridge and not Salem Street. She is opposed to renaming the Salem Street bridge but if it is the Blackwell Street bridge being renamed for John Lewis, that she is for it.

Mayor Blackman commented that we are not removing the Officers name from the Salem Street Bridge and that the bridge being renamed is the East Blackwell Street Bridge over the Rockaway River.

(Aldermember Valencia left the meeting at 9:20p.m.)

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE SESSION

Acting Municipal Clerk Schmidt then read Res. 241-2020 – Resolution Authorizing Closed/Executive Session to discussion litigation regarding Peterson v. Town of Dover and Donald Travisano, individually and in his official capacity as supervisor, Docket No. MRS-L-288-19 in part. It was mentioned that the session would be no more than half hour in length and that action would not be taken.

A motion was made to enter Closed/Executive Session and adopt Resolution 241-2020 by Aldermember Ballesteros, second by Aldermember Correa.

Resolution 240-2020

	A.M. Correa	A.M. Tapia	A.M. Ballesteros	A.M. Rugg	A.M. Cruz	A.M. Valencia	A.M. Quinones	A.M. Wittner	Mayor Blackman
Motion			X						
Second	X								
Yes	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
No									
Abstain									

The Resolution was adopted 7-0 and the Board entered Closed/Executive Session at 9:22p.m.

The Board of Aldermen returned from Closed/Executive Session at 9:48p.m. A motion was made by Aldermember Wittner, second by Aldermember Quinones to adjourn the meeting at 9:48p.m. with the following members in favor: Aldermembers Correa, Tapia, Ballesteros, Cruz, Quinones, Wittner and Mayor Blackman.

Respectfully Submitted,



John P. Schmidt

Acting Municipal Clerk