

Council

Meeting Minutes - April 22, 2003

REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 22, 2003

Mayor Ganz opened the meeting at 6:10 p.m. Assistant Municipal Clerk Bojanowski read the following statement of compliance:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, annual notice of all meetings of the Borough of Fair Lawn was published in "The Record" issue of December 27, 2002. Notices were also posted on the Bulletin Board located on the First Floor of the Municipal Building and at the Maurice Pine Free Public Library, copies mailed to The North Jersey Herald and News. The Annual Notice identified the meeting location and the time of the Council Meetings and Work Sessions.

PRESENT: Mayor Ganz, Deputy Mayors Etlar and Weinstein, and Councilmembers Caan. And Amato (late)

ALSO PRESENT: Acting Manager/Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski, Assistant Municipal Clerk Bojanowski and Attorney Lustgarten.

Mayor Ganz read the following statement: Good evening. We meet at six p.m. this evening in the Council Chambers, an unusual hour because of unusual circumstances. Several weeks ago, America's youth went into harm's way to protect, preserve and defend our way of life. On Thursday night, last week, on April 17, Police Officer Mary Ann Collura also went into harm's way to protect the residents of Fair Lawn, to defend our way of life.

Our troops in Iraq - may they safely complete their mission - protect and defend us. Officer Mary Ann Collura did the same thing, and more than 50 of her colleagues, do the same thing every day here in Fair Lawn.

Mary Ann was a larger-than-life person who, from the time that she was a young girl, wanted to be a cop. She was an auxiliary officer for three years, and a member of Fair Lawn's finest for 18 years.

Last Thursday, while assisting a Clifton police officer in a traffic stop, she never stopped protecting and defending - and tragically lost her life in the process. The sheer brutality of that act defies our way of life, and the image that we each have of our community.

This is our first police fatality since a police force of part-time Marshals was created in 1924. It has obviously affected our entire community. On Sunday evening, a candle-light vigil took place at Borough Hall and more than a thousand people attended to pay tribute to Mary Ann.

The Council acted promptly upon hearing of the act, and upon being briefed by Chief Marshall, we committed the resources of the Borough to assist in the investigation and search for those responsible and prepare for the wake and funeral as a community. As a community, we stood united in our tribute to Mary Ann and the resolution of condolences that the Council will shortly vote on to honor her memory. We will have an abbreviated meeting this evening so that the Council can attend the wake and honor her memory.

I have already met privately with Helen Collura and her children to express the deep regret that the

Council feels, and that my wife and I personally feel, over their tragic loss. Their attitude is a healthy one: they do not dwell on the death of Mary Ann, but rather they celebrate her life and her achievements. We as a council can do no less. May she rest in peace.

PROCLAMATIONS: Days of Remembrance

Assistant Municipal Clerk Bojanowski read the proclamation. Mayor Ganz presented the proclamation to Eva and Henry Safferman.

Eva Safferman stated that fifty-eight years ago her and her family were liberated from a Berlin camp. It was coincidentally her birthday. She stood before them in remembrance of great darkness for one special reason to remind everyone what can happen when intolerance and bigotry infect the society. They must learn to oppose intolerance in whatever form it may take. They must reach out to each other with understanding and love. They must always remember to always remember. She thanked the Mayor and Council for the proclamation.

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Weinstein and a second by Councilmember Caan, it was unanimously agreed to open the time for public comments.

This evening, the agenda had been re-ordered to allow County Executive Dennis McNerney to speak. On behalf of all Bergen County he expressed his deep sadness for the loss in terms of the events that occurred last week. He commends the Fair Lawn Police and Sheriff, and members of the police community in Florida. He extends sympathy to Mary Ann's family for their tragic loss and she is in our prayers.

Mayor Ganz thanked Dennis McNerney for making available the resources of the County, more specifically the buses for transportation for the funeral.

Senator Joseph Coniglio stated he also wanted to extend his deepest sympathy for the fallen officer, and if there is anything he can do for this community do not hesitate to ask. Mayor Ganz stated he appreciated the out reach from his office as well for offering the available resources from the State which are being utilized for the wake and funeral.

There being no additional comments from the public, upon motion by Councilmember Caan and a second by Deputy Mayor Etlar, the time for public comments was unanimously closed.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mayor Ganz stated the Manager's Report was on the front table with no changes made.

MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT: Planning Board Class II

Mayor Ganz appointed Alan Neggia as the Class II Planning Board member for the term of May 1 to December 31, 2003.

ORDINANCES: FIRST READING

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein, it was unanimously agreed to read the following ordinance by title.

ORDINANCE NO. 1948-2003

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE RECEIPT, ACCEPTANCE AND DEPOSIT OF FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION THEREFORE

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein, Resolution No. 154-2003 introducing Ordinance No. 1948-2003 was discussed.

There being no further discussion, Resolution No. 154-2003 introducing Ordinance No. 1948-2003 was unanimously passed.

Borough Attorney Lustgarten stated that this ordinance allows acceptance of funds for bike racks.

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Councilmember Caan, it was unanimously agreed to read the following ordinance by title.

ORDINANCE NO. 1949-2003

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE RECEIPT, ACCEPTANCE AND DEPOSIT OF FUNDS THEREFORE

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein, Resolution No. 155-2003 introducing Ordinance No. 1949-2003 was unanimously passed.

Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated this is an Ordinance to accept \$20,000.00 from the state Department of Transportation for Barrier Free ramps

Mayor Ganz thanks Senator Coniglio once again for his help in obtaining the Grant.

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Councilmember Caan, it was unanimously agreed to read the following ordinance by title.

ORDINANCE NO. 1950-2003

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE RECEIPT, ACCEPTANCE AND DEPOSIT OF FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION THEREFORE

Mayor Ganz stated that this ordinance is for funds for improvements to 20th , Fairclough, Kipp, and Romaine Street for the cost of \$45,000.00 from the Department of Transportation. He thanked Senator Coniglio for his efforts in obtaining these funds.

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Councilmember Caan, Resolution No. 156-2003 adopting Ordinance No. 1950-2003 was unanimously adopted.

Upon motion by Councilmember Caan and a second by Deputy Mayor Etlar, it was unanimously agreed to read the following ordinance by title.

ORDINANCE NO. 1951-2003

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR A CERTAIN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE RECEIPT, ACCEPTANCE AND DEPOSIT OF FUNDS THEREFORE

Mayor Ganz explained that this ordinance calls for funds to improve Memorial Field and Center Rec Field at a cost of \$72,000.00, Memorial Field Lighting at a cost of \$110,000.00 and Athletic Field Lighting at a cost of \$142,500.00. He felt this would eliminate the field congestion and would allow better use of the fields.

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Deputy Mayor Weinstein, Resolution No. 157-2003 adopting Ordinance No. 1951-2003 was unanimously adopted.

Upon motion by Councilmember Caan and a second by Deputy Mayor Etlar, it was unanimously agreed to read the following ordinance by title.

ORDINANCE NO. 1952-2003

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN, 2000, BY AMENDING CHAPTER 125 ENTITLED ALAND DEVELOPMENT SPECIFICALLY SECTION 125-43 RELATING TO OUTDOOR CAFES AND SECTION 125-85S ENTITLED AOUTDOOR MINOR SITE PLAN@

Mayor Ganz handed out a revision to this Ordinance, it is not only an application for approval, it is now a provision for a renewal certificate for half the price of the original approval at the suggestion of Construction Code Official Van Hook.

He thanked Attorney Lusgarten for drafting a plan so quickly and Deputy Mayor Steve Weinstein for bringing this matter to the Council=s attention. The purpose of this Ordinance is to streamline the process if a business wants an outdoor café. As long as they are in basic compliance, they can be issued the permit at a very modest fee.

Upon motion by Councilmember Caan and a second by Deputy Mayor Elter, Resolution No. 158-2003 adopting Ordinance No. 1952-2003 was unanimously adopted.

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Weinstein and a second by Deputy Mayor Etlar, it was unanimously agreed to read the following ordinance by title and open the time for public hearing.

ORDINANCES SECOND READING:

ORDINANCE NO. 1943-2003

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN 2000, SPECIFICALLY CHAPTER 125, ENTITLED, ALAND DEVELOPMENT@, BY ADDING NEW SECTION 125-15A, ENTITLED, AUSES PROHIBITED IN ALL ZONES EXCEPT TOWNHOUSE RESIDENTIAL ZONES@ AND AMENDING SECTION 125-21.A(2) ENTITLED AR-5-1 AND R-5-2 TOWNHOUSE RESIDENTIAL ZONES@

Borough Attorney Lustgarten advised that the Council is postponing consideration of this ordinance. The second reading of this Ordinance is adjourned until May 6, 2003.

RESOLUTIONS BY CONSENT #15-2003

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Councilmember Caan, Consent Agenda #15-2003 containing the following items was unanimously adopted.

- a. Resol. #160-2003 - Refund of Taxes
- b. Resol. #161-2003 - Professional Services Engineering Senior Citizens Renovations
- c. Resol. #162-2003 - Award of Bid: Vehicles: Tahoe, Expedition or Equivalent
- d. Resol. #163-2003 - Award of Bid: Trucks - DPW (Truck Chassis with Packer Body and Snow Plow)
- e. Resol. #164-2003 - Urging Passage of A-275 and S-1924 concerning WTC Victims
- f. Resol. #165-2003 - Supporting Troops
- g. Resol. #166-2003 - Interlocal Agreement Prospect Park
- h. Resol. #167-2003 - Express condolences to MaryAnn Collura's family

Comments from Members of the Council

Councilmember Caan read the following statement: After our meeting tonight, Mayor Ganz and the rest of the Council will be going to pay our respects to the family of Officer Mary Ann Collura. But beyond her mother, sisters, brother and the rest of her family, this tragedy has impacted many more families. The Fair Lawn Police Department is a family whose bonds are as strong as any family there is. You can see in their faces how deeply this has affected each and every one of them. Chief Marshall and every member of his department have worked tirelessly around the clock on this since last Thursday.

Beyond the Fair Lawn Police Department family is the family of all police officers no matter where they serve. I believe tomorrow you will see that as hundreds of officers from the United States and Canada come to pay their respects.

There is also another family who Officer Collura was a part of her entire life. The Fair Lawn family. She was raised in Fair Lawn, went to Fair Lawn High School and continued to live in Fair Lawn. How often do you see a young person set their sights on a goal, continue to strive for it, and succeed at achieving their dream by becoming the first female police officer in Fair Lawn? This was Officer Collura.

I have heard so many stories of how well she did her job, but also stories about her compassion, caring and kindness. She would show up at someone's home, help them with their problem and stay with them even after the situation was resolved to make sure they were alright. And even after that she would come back a couple of days later to see that they were ok. This was above and beyond of what was expected, but it was who she was. Just like looking after the newer officers and offering them her guidance, as well as contacting other female officers to support them when joining other local police departments.

I know that all the families of Fair Lawn would like to wish a full and speedy recovery to Officer Farrell of the Clifton Police Department and thank the hundreds of police departments involved in this case, but especially the Clifton, Paterson, and Passaic Police Departments as well as the Bergen County and Passaic County Sheriff's Departments, the Police Departments in Broome County New York, the Florida Highway Patrol and finally the members of the Hernando and Sumter County Sheriff's Departments in Florida.

I think the one image that I'll remember the most, is one from the memorial here in front of Borough Hall. There are a couple of photos of a young Mary Ann in 1975. They look like photos from a yearbook. The photos were from a time before she became a police officer 28 years ago, but a time when she knew

what she wanted to become. How young she looked just starting out and now knowing how much she accomplished in the last 28 years. It's just so sad to know that there should have been many, many more photos of good times and many, many more years to go.

Deputy Mayor Etlar read the following statement: Mary Ann Collura was a person that reached out and touched many, I knew her personally and I can tell you that last Thursday people were struck with a tragedy, but Fair Lawn has faced adversities before and we will face more and we will overcome them. She should rest in Peace.

Deputy Mayor Weinstein made the following comments: About three weeks ago we had a Police Awards Assembly here and the tragic event of Thursday night reinforces the value of those awards and how we should never take the prestigious Police Department here in Fair Lawn for granted. In the last number of days, speaking to a number of people who grew up with MaryAnn, you hear little antidotes of how she was a wonderful babysitter before she was on the Police force, how about 6 years ago she helped deliver life, someone was giving birth in her living room, she was the first one there to help start the procedure. Fair Lawn lost a member of the family, and on behalf on my wife and family our prayers go with the Collura family.

Deputy Mayor Amato read the following statement: When the news of the shooting of the police officer in Fair Lawn hit our home, my wife and I of course like every Fair Lawn resident was shocked and then because of my work here on the council and as a former fire fighter I knew Mary Ann on a smile and a hi basis, she knew a lot of people of course and I was one of people on that kind of basis, everyone that knew her knew that she was a true professional and very dedicated to her work, there was no way she would back off in the line of danger, she laid her life on the line.

Her family and very close friends are experiencing grief that I really don't know how one would overcome. I can only say that they should seek if they choose the help of the Borough, the Borough Manager, the Council, and certainly most importantly all her brothers and sisters that worked on the force, emergency services, I know they will do everything they can for the family. This is going to be a tragedy that won't soon be forgotten. It will be with us for a long time. It is the kind of thing that in a small town like ours we hope never happens, and it happened to a person that we all knew to a certain extent.

Borough Attorney Lustgarten stated that he had worked over last 18 years on and off with Mary Ann. We had certain cases together. We discussed various Borough issues. My recollection of her is very simple, everytime I bumped into her, might have been at CVS or Borough Hall, she was always smiling and she always said hello and that was refreshing, that doesn't always happen. There is a memorial fund that has been established for her and I am pleased that it only says Officer MaryAnn Collura. I might not sure that she wanted to be a ground breaker by being the first female officer. I know that has been in the news papers. In my recollection of her is that she is a police officer and she will always be in our hearts.

Acting Manager / Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski stated that she had known Mary Ann for the last ten years that she's been with the Borough and she is an officer that everybody loved. She had a smile for everybody. She went out of her way to help everybody. She was a mentor to our younger officers many of whom called her mom because that's just the way she was. Mary Ann did the job, she did what had to be done, she never ever forgot to smile, to care. She had such a wide variety of friends and people who care about her. I was amazed. She touched so many lives and I think her sister said it best, AAs you go through life, you make a difference. Well, Mary Ann made a difference in a very big way, and her entire Borough family is going to miss her very, very badly.

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Councilmember Caan, it was unanimously agreed to open the time for public comments.

Don Oliver, 8-32 Mitchell Place, on behalf of his family, himself and Fair Lawn Homeowners Association, expressed his sincere condolences to her family, to the Police Department and to all other Police Departments because it is one big family. It is a tragic loss for everyone, and for the Police Department. He suggested that they honor her by renaming Berdan Grove as Mary Ann Collura Memorial Park. It would be a nice honor to Mary Ann for her dedicated service to the Borough.

Mayor Ganz stated that on Saturday when Chief Marshall gave a briefing, the Council collectively asked the Department and the Police Benevolent Association what they thought was an appropriate memorial. We will have to wait to see what they have to say first.

Mr. Oliver suggested since Officer Collura was the first female officer, and the first to lose her life in her line of work, a memorial should be erected outside Borough Hall as a tribute to her.

There being no additional comments from the public, upon motion by Councilmember Caan and a second by Deputy Mayor Etlar, the time for public comments was unanimously closed.

Mayor Ganz continued the reading of the Proclamations:

National Volunteer Week Proclamation

Mayor Ganz stated how volunteerism was the single most important component of what makes Fair Lawn tick as a municipality and what makes ours a unique community to live in. We have volunteer Fire Department, Ambulance Corps and Rescue Squad. Officer Collura for example was a member of the Auxiliary Police Force before becoming a member of Fair Lawn=s finest. We just came from the Senior Center, where the volunteers who work there were honored for their fine work everyday of the week.

Day of Prayer

Mayor Ganz stated that this proclamation is most fitting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Etlar and a second by Councilmember Caan, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn B. Bojanowski, RMC
Assistant Municipal Clerk

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