

Municipal Building
1200 Mountain Avenue

January 27, 2009

A special meeting of the Mayor and Council was held at the above place on the above date commencing at 8:00 p.m.

Mayor
Council President:

Bob Schueler
Michael Class
Debra DeVuyst
Bob Edwards
Bob Gorr
Michael Venuto

Attorney: Edward Johnson

Council President Schueler opened the meeting with the Sunshine Law Statement saying the meeting had been advertised in the Special Meeting Notice of January 23, 2009.

Attorney Ed Johnson swore in John Fuhrmann as Mayor of Middlesex Borough. After being sworn into office, Mayor Fuhrmann made the following comments.

Tonight I stand before you honored to be your new Mayor, plucked out of political retirement to help stabilize a municipal corporation which has become a little unsettled.

Toward that end, I suggest together, we pursue a sense of single purpose. The single purpose of the mayor and council working in concert to restore the confidence of our shareholder/citizens in their local government. They must be assured the borough is not without leadership and is functioning in their best interests. To let them know that together we will pursue an austere budget, union contracts that recognize the current economic facts of life and together make every effort not to diminish our municipal quality of life.

Before going any further I want to thank and congratulate Council President Robert Schueler on the great job he did filling in as our mayor. I wish to thank him too for joining the majority and making last Thursday night's vote unanimous. That was a class act Robert, thank you. Thanks and congratulations as well to the other council members and the municipal staff in going forward in the absence of a chief executive and board chairman.

"Trust is the coin of the realm".said former United States Attorney General Griffin Bell. I would like that to be our mantra at all times. Especially in times like these the mayor and council must understand they are not inherent adversaries. We must recognize that we can work together, confident that through mutual respect, trust and especially open communication the responsibilities of municipal government can be met professionally

and with success.

In this administration all councilmatic initiatives will be vetted and those that are not budget busters and have merit in the eyes of the majority will proceed no matter which side of the aisle they were initiated.

Yet, I am not so naïve to not recognize that differences of opinion will occur, nor am I so naïve to not be aware of the political realities inherent in a two party system. However, there will always be time to scrimmage on the political gridiron.

For now I suggest “welcome reason together” paraphrasing Lyndon Johnson to meet the immediate and serious challenges we confront. If this means compromise, compromise we will. But without compromising the trust, respect and open communication I’ve just mentioned.

We will immediately contact the Police union representatives and the Department of Public Works union representatives to arrange meetings with them to commence negotiations. Negotiation committees are in place and we will move straightaway to insure the timely commencement of these vital talks.

I would like to institute two Saturday morning budget workshop sessions to go over that document thoroughly as a committee of the whole so each and everyone of us on the governing body has a total understanding of our spending plan.

No effort will be spared to get Middlesex” Stimulus dollars”. We will direct our professionals to explore every available avenue and reach out to our county, state and federal representatives for assistance in getting our share.

When I first joined the governing body in 1992, we went to great lengths to engage our neighboring communities in shared services and met with limited success. But now times are more critical and it is my hope that we can come upon some practical approaches to cost saving by sharing mutual services with our neighbors.

Right now it appears to me that our borough is a little frayed around the edges. The street designs on Rt. 28 are wearing out. We will have to address that. Thousands of cars traverse that thoroughfare each day and one has to think about the impression we are making.

There are all manner of vehicles parked on our streets and on our properties, boats, trailers, oversized trucks etc. The streets of Middlesex Borough were not designed to become marinas and trailer parks. As property values dwindle extra ordinary vehicle parking makes the problem worse. We must tighten up that situation as well.

I want to see an invigorated Environmental commission. With the environment being a front burner issue I think it is vital to have our commission in good operating order. Because as Kermit has reminded us so often over the years, “It’s not easy being green.”

I would like to see a special area designated for skate boards and line skaters. The

tennis surfaces at Mountain View Park were expensive to install and the wear and tear from the skates for which the surface was not designed is increasing. Maybe we can find some money in an existing ordinance for a handball court.

These are small matters to be sure, but they do affect our every day borough quality of life and have an effect on us and how we view our community.

I wish I had a grand scheme to lighten the increasing economic burden the country, state, county and municipal governments are experiencing. To say nothing of our households. But I don't have one. What I do have is a guarded sense of optimism that at some point everything will come together and we, governments at all levels, will work our way out of the current situation.

That said, it is imperative that we here on Main Street work in concert to insure that Middlesex Borough will have done its part to make that New Day come sooner than later.

So now it's time to go to work, but just before we do I want to thank those members of my family who were able to be here this evening. Thanks to Mackenzie, Katelyn and Haiden for holding the bible. A special thanks to Sheila for her encouragement as we embark on this unanticipated phase of our life together.

To Mr. & Mrs. Middlesex I want to say thank you for the warm reception you have given my nomination. I will do my best, working with the council not to let you down.

Thank you all very much.

There being no further business to discuss, the Special Meeting was adjourned by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilman Gorr and carried by unanimous vote of Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Anello, RMC
Borough Clerk

