

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST
WORK SESSION Minutes
August 12, 2024**

Mayor Bernstein called the meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm and asked Walker Reiss to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present:

Mayor Bernstein, Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Absent: None

Also Present: Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator
Mallory Garvin, for the Borough Attorney
Peter Suh, CFO
Nick Chelius, Borough Engineer

Mayor Bernstein asked for a motion to suspend the regular order of business to present Marly Kay of Marly Music a certificate of appreciation for her contributions to Youth Arts & Culture in the Borough.

A motion was made by Councilmember Reiss and seconded by Councilmember Collins

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Absent: None

Mayor Bernstein invited Marly Kay up to receive a certificate of appreciation.

Mayor Bernstein spoke about Ms. Kay's work with area youth in music education.

Mayor Bernstein: *The study of music is vital to a well-rounded education. You had the vision and talent to create Music with Marly.*

You and your program provide a supportive and rich environment for students of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels to study music and to perform. The students are exposed to learning and performance opportunities that build self-confidence and self-esteem, allows them to be creative and courageous, teaches discipline, collaboration and respect and ignites all areas of their intellectual and cognitive abilities.

You encourage our kids to explore, create, defy convention, to be confident and to be proud of themselves.

I have seen their performances, their work ethic and dedication that allows them to soar. One of your students, Alex Jacob, is someone I have seen on your performance stage time and again. Alex is one of your success stories, but not the only one. I will let Marly tell you more about his journey in a little bit, but he is a talented individual and musician. He has set a high bar for others students to emulate; he graduated NVD this Spring and is off to Tufts University later this month. Good luck to you, Alex.

Watching you, Alex and the other students, your collective hard work, their unforgettable performances, their collaboration, the friendships among your students, and their shared excitement made it important for me to recognize you publicly for your achievement and selflessness.

Your students are magnificent and will be successful in whatever path they choose, in part, because of the lessons they learned and their experiences through Music with Marly.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, please accept this Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of your work. Thank you.

Ms. Kay thanked the Mayor and Council and then spoke about her work.

Marly Kay: If I earned a penny every time someone asked me "Why do you work with so many families in Demarest?", I'd probably already have surpassed Elon Musk and become the richest person in the world...while my typical response is something sassy along the lines of "I love Demarest and Demarest loves me"...the truth is, the effect the people of this town have had on both my personal and professional life is much deeper than that.

When I look at Alex and the people in this room, I feel as if I can see my entire adult life flash before my eyes. Your very own councilman, Jonathan Reiss, was the first person to hire me to help with his son's DMS rock band rehearsals outside of school...as I was entering my freshman year of college as Alex is now. Soon after, Stacey Braff gave me my first opportunity to work as a private piano instructor with her son Eli, and encouraged me to help her form his own DMS rock band...leading to my introduction to Alex and his family...leading me to all of you in this room...leading to what has become "Music with Marly", the greatest adventure of my life thus far.

So, before I sing Alex's praises for the final time, I'd like to take a brief moment to thank all of you, for not only encouraging your children to love music, but also for the love and encouragement you have shown me over the past 10 years. As I tell my students, I have learned more from them than they ever will from me, no matter what life has confronted me with, Demarest has always been there...from the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

And now - to turn our attention to the heart and soul of this evening, please put your hands together as he joins me, and only — Alex Jacob

Alex —

I could stand here and rave to your family and friends about all the things they already know. You are intelligent, talented, and passionate...3 qualities that are impressive all on their own. They've seen you play; they've heard you sing...your bandmates are probably a little tired of hearing me rave about those things as well.

Instead, I'd like to share with them the little things that only I get to see, things to me that are more important than all of that, and that make you the truly special, beautiful human being that you are. Look around the room-the parents of this room already know their children look up to you...tonight, I want to show them why.

When your child is unsure of something musically, Alex is there to guide them.

When your child wants to give up, it's Alex's encouragement that keeps them going.

When your child comes to rehearsal feeling down...Alex is there to crack a joke and make them smile.

When your child leaves rehearsal feeling down. Sometimes, because of something I said or did...Alex is there to comfort them.

When your child needs to use the bathroom, get a band aid or a drink of water...Alex is there to help them.

When rehearsal schedule changes are made at the last minute, Alex adjusts his calendar no matter what he has going on.

When he knows I'm going to have a long day...Alex brings me a bar, a spare hair tie (thanks daphne), a bottle of water.

When rehearsals end late at night, Alex stays after to clean up whether he is scheduled to or not, to make sure I am not there alone to walk to my car.

The other question I'm most frequently asked is "What are you going to do without Alex"and the truth is, when I look around this room, I'm not worried at all.

The night before our show back in June, I fell ill, and had to lie down...the entire advanced band rallied together and stayed until midnight to pack up the cars so we could be ready for the performance the next day.

That night proved Alex's leadership has set the standard of what MWM can and should do. Our newest senior staffer, Elilee Ram, has been doing a fantastic job replacing Alex, and I'm excited to see what's next for our future.

So, for the last time—while I know it's usually more fun to boo him—just the once, please give Alex Jacob the round of applause he deserves.

The Council took a brief recess to take pictures with Marly and her students.

Mayor Bernstein then called the meeting back to order.

Resolution No. 1141-24 RESOLUTION REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR AUTHORIZATION OF AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 40A:4-46 AND N.J.S.A. 40A:4-48 – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Fox to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Absent: None

Resolution No. 142-24 CAPITAL BUDGET AMENDMENT

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Council President Slowikowski to approve the resolution.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None
Absent: None

ORDINANCE (INTRODUCTION):

ORDINANCE 1147 -2024 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND MODIFYING CHAPTER 149 STORMWATER CONTROL OF THE DEMAREST BOROUGH CODE

Councilmember Fox made a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No. 1147 -24 and it published in the Bergen Record with notice of Public Hearing to be held on August 26, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jiang.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None
Absent: None

ORDINANCE NO. 1148-24 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST AND APPROPRIATING \$3,496,403 THEREFOR, AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,982,761 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE THE SAME

Council President Slowikowski made a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No. 1147 -24 and it published in the Bergen Record with notice of Public Hearing to be held on August 26, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None
Absent: None

Work Session Discussion Items:

Engineer's Report - Nick Chelius reviewed the monthly engineer's report. Including status on paving projects. He reported that Madison Ave. milling and paving is complete and that the roads including in the Riverside Coop project are complete with the exception of Pine Terrace. Pine Terrace is scheduled begin in the next week. In response to a question from Mayor Bernstein, he clarified that Pine Terrace paving project is for the already improved portion of the street only. A proposal for unimproved roads was submitted earlier today for consideration on the next Council agenda. Mr. Chelius also reported that he continues to try and schedule a meeting with the DEP in regard to the CAP for the compost site. He explained the design of Stewart and Stelfox that is ongoing, which includes widening Stelfox and adding laid back Belgian block curb.

Request from Shade Tree Commission – Landmark Tree Designation

The Council discussed the email received from Linda Cetta, Chair of Shade Tree Commission requesting the Council to consider a tree at 21 Eric Pl. be designated as a "Landmark Tree". After

discussing the tree and reviewing the report from Arborist that called the tree an “unusual size for its genus/species”, the Council did not feel they had enough information about the tree to designate it as a “Landmark Tree”. It was noted that the inspection was in response to a tree removal permit from the resident that noted the tree was very large and close to his home. The resident feels his home’s safety is at risk and he is willing to mitigate the removal per the ordinance. Councilmember Fox noted that even if the tree was designated as such, the Council could approve the removal, but it would require one more tree in mitigation. The council unanimously decided not to designate the tree and to refer it back to Shade Tree Commission to process the removal permit as per the ordinance.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Bernstein reviewed the consent agenda and noted that no member requested any item be removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately.

Mayor Bernstein also noted that no member would like to abstain from voting on any resolution on the consent agenda.

Consent Agenda:

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| Resolution No. 136-24 | Approving Payment #1 – DLS Contracting |
| Resolution No. 137-24 | Renewal of Membership in the Bergen County JIF |
| Resolution No. 138-24 | Approving Payment #3 – Covino & Sons |
| Resolution No. 139-24 | Approving Employment Contract – Deputy Police Chief |
| Resolution No. 140-24 | Bills List |

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Reiss to approve the consent agenda.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None
Absent: None

Meeting Open to the Public

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Fox to approve opening the meeting to the public.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None
Absent: None

There being no public wishing to speak, Councilmember Fox made a motion to close the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins and approved by all.

Closed Session Resolution No. 2024-004

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Fox to adjourn to closed session for a discussion on potential litigation with no action to be taken.

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Absent: None

The Council reconvened into open session. There being no more business before the Council, Councilmember Collins made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox and approved by all.

The meeting was therefore adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Falkenstern, Acting Borough Clerk