

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST
Municipal Building**

**WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
January 8, 2024
7:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm at the above place.

Mayor Bernstein read the compliance statement and invited all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Absent:

Also Present: Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator
Deena Rosendahl, Borough Attorney
Nick Chelius, Borough engineer
Peter Suh, CFO
John McLoughlin, Fire Chief / OEM Coordinator

Proclamation for Arbor Day 2024 – Mayor Bernstein noted that he would sign the below proclamation to proclaim April 26, 2024 Arbor Day in Demarest

WHEREAS in 1872, the Nebraska Board of Agriculture established a special day to be set aside for the planting of trees, *and*

WHEREAS this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, *and*

WHEREAS Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, *and*

WHEREAS trees can be a solution to combating climate change by reducing the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cutting heating and cooling costs, moderating the temperature, cleaning the air, producing life-giving oxygen, and providing habitat for wildlife, *and*

WHEREAS trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires, and countless other wood products, *and*

WHEREAS trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, *and*

WHEREAS trees – wherever they are planted – are a source of joy and spiritual renewal.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Brian Bernstein, Mayor of the Borough of Demarest do hereby proclaim April 26, 2024, as **ARBOR DAY** In the Borough of Demarest, and I urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, *and*

FURTHER, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

Ordinance (Introduction): (none)

Ordinance Public Hearing (Adoption): (none)

Work Session Discussion Items:

Engineer's Report – Nick Chelius reviewed the engineer's report, noting that the review process with the DEP on the CAP related to the compost site was progressing well and that the necessary revisions based on DEP feedback are being made. He expects the completed revision to be done by the end of the month with final approval expected by the end of February. The schedule is dependent on receiving final comments from Green Acres. Mayor Bernstein asked about the schedule for the work and whether it was dependent on the weather since there is planting involved. Nick noted that the entire schedule is included in the CAP.

Standing Committee Responsibilities – Mayor Bernstein advised the council that he would like to review the new standing committees created at the Reorganization Meeting since they are updated from previous committees. He noted that "Economic Development" is a new committee and he asked Councilmember Jiang, chair of this new committee to contact the Borough Planner to begin to look at the downtown area to review current uses. Additionally, he would like the ordinance committee to review the vacant property ordinance to be sure it is written in a way that discourages empty storefronts.

Investigation of Redevelopment – Councilmember Jiang will reach out to Darlene Green, the Borough Planner, to discuss the best use of the downtown properties, including the Bank building, and explore whether a Redevelopment Study is necessary. Councilmember Marks noted that he saw renovation work taking place at the empty storefront that was previously a pizza restaurant. The Borough Administrator noted that she did not believe any permits have been issued for the site and she will ask the Construction Official to make sure that any work is properly permitted.

Library Board Meeting Schedule – The Mayor noted that discussion on this item is no longer necessary as the Library Board has modified their meeting schedule so as not to hold a meeting on a holiday.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Bernstein asks if any member would like to have any resolution removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately. (None)

Mayor Bernstein asks if any member would like to abstain from voting on any resolution on the consent agenda. (None)

A motion was made by Councilmember Marks and seconded by Councilmember Fox to approve the consent agenda.

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Consent Agenda:

Resolution No. 034-24	Approving Soil Moving 15 Arhtur Ct.
Resolution No. 035-24	Approving Shared Service Agreement for County Trees
Resolution No. 036-24	Bill List Dated 1/5/24
Resolution No. 037-24	Approving Part Time Finance Assistant

Approval of Minutes:

January 1, 2024 Sine/Die Meeting

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Marks to approve the minutes.

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, seconded by Councilmember Marks and approved by all to open the meeting to the public.

There being no public wishing to speak, the meeting was closed.

Closed Session Resolution 2024-001

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox and seconded by Council President Slowikowski to approve Resolution 2024-001 allowing the Council to adjourn to closed session for a discussion about ongoing contract negotiations. It was noted that the Council will probably

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

The Council returned to the public meeting at 8:15 pm.

Resolution No. 038-24

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to approve Resolution No. 038-24.

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

There being no other business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'S' followed by a wavy line.