

April 18, 2013

PRINCETON COUNCIL MEETING
April 18, 2013

A meeting of the Mayor and Council was held on this date at 5:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room in the municipal complex, 400 Witherspoon Street, Princeton, NJ 08540.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Clerk read the following statement.

The following is an accurate statement concerning the providing of notice of this meeting and said statement shall be entered in the minutes of this meeting. Notice of this meeting as required by Sections 4a, 3d, 13 and 14 of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided to the public in the form of a written notice. On April 15, 2013 at 4:45 p.m., said schedule was posted on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Building, transmitted to the Princeton Packet, the Trenton Times, the Trentonian, the Town Topics, and filed with the Municipal Clerk

ROLL CALL

The Municipal Clerk then called the roll.

Present: Mesdames Butler, Crumiller, Howard and Messers Liverman, Miller and Simon and Mayor Lempert.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Mr. Bruschi, Ms. Monzo, and Mr. Schmierer.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Roger Martindell, Patton Avenue, said that he did not envy Councils position and that there is a history of misconduct and criminality in the Police Department. He said that there is a history to sweep things under the rug and that it was now incumbent on Council to break the cycle.

Barbara Trelstad, 2 Firestone Court said that she thought that Chief Dudeck was the right man for the job and that he was a leader, a mentor and a teacher. She said that outside forces may have influenced events but that it was up to Council to investigate the matter or we will never know.

Kevin Wilkes, 110 Witherspoon Street said that the dynamics of consolidation have turned into a collision. He said that there was significant unhappiness in the ranks of the sergeants and that he urged Council to access the motives of the accusers and stand behind the Chief.

Mildred Trotman, Witherspoon Street, said that she finds it hard to believe that this incident has left us where we are right now. Chief Dudeck has given stellar service to Princeton and she had high praise for his leadership. She said that his reputation is being scarred.

Peter Marks, Moore Street said that the charge of "locker room" language is despicable.

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Alexi Assmus said that other towns are dealing with the developers of Avalon Bay and she urged Council to negotiate tough and hard with them.

Jerome McGowen said that he worked with Chief Dudeck during his tenure and said that he was an honorable man and that he was shocked by the current situation. He said that anytime a Union chooses not to back the Chief, there is something going on. There is a question of timing, why now and why convict in the media when there is no trial?

Minnie Craig asked what do we learn from this. We have to watch what we say.

Wendy Ludlum said that she was concerned about Avalon Bay and that the community would like to see the concept plan.

Joe Small, Hawthorn Avenue said that the comments of the former Borough Council member were eloquent.

Roger Martindell said that the Chief has seven days in which to revoke the agreement and he hopes he does revoke it.

13-119 CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION
TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION
(Open Public Meetings Act Sec.3)

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of Princeton:

1. This body will now convene into a closed session that will be limited only to consideration of an item or items with respect to which the public may be excluded pursuant to section 7B of the Open Public Meetings Act.
2. The general nature of the subject or subjects to be discussed in said session is as follows:

Personnel/Litigation

3. Stated as precisely as presently possible, the following are the time when and the circumstances under which the discussion conducted at said session can be disclosed to the public:

Within 90 days or upon settlement of litigation, if applicable

Personnel: Chief Dudeck

Litigation: Avalon Bay

The above referenced issues were discussed by the Princeton Council.

OPEN SESSION

13-120 Resolution Concerning Separation Agreement and Release, Chief Dudeck

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Mr. Miller offered a motion to approve a resolution Concerning Separation Agreement and Release, Chief Dudeck. Mr. Liverman seconded the motion which was carried by five affirmative votes. Ms. Butler voted in the negative.

Mr. Bruchi said that the agreement allows for early retirement and legal release. Chief Dudeck is currently out of the office on accrued medical time and he will retire as of October 1, 2013. Allegations have been withdrawn and the investigation by the prosecutor's office has been withdrawn. Mr. Bruschi said that the Princeton Administration has the utmost confidence on our police department and in the past 18 months the Chief has made many decisions to benefit the department.

Ms. Butler asked what can and cannot Council legally say.

Mr. Schmierer said that Council is not permitted to comment on specific allegations as it remains a personnel matter.

Mr. Simon said that Chief Dudeck was a standup guy and that the decision to retire was his. Mr. Simon wished him well and said that the Police Department is resilient and dedicated.

Ms. Butler said that Chief Dudeck was dedicated in his service to the police department and to his family and that he has served admirably. She said that it is a sad day for the Police Department and for her personally. She said that she has been under pressure to unanimously approve this resolution, and she cannot.

Mr. Miller said that he had recently met Chief Dudeck and thought that they shared the same vision. He said that we need to look into what got us to this point and learn from the experience.

Ms. Crumiller said that she would have preferred an investigation but will vote for the resolution so that the Chief can move on.

Ms. Howard said that they are legally constrained to openly discuss personnel matters. She recognized his 30 years of service and she has accepted his resignation and recognizes the need to move forward.

Ms. Lempert said that the agreement provides Chief Dudeck with the benefits he is entitled to and limits our liability. Chief Dudeck led us through a trying time with consolidation and for that we thank him.

(Comments attached to this set of minutes)

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Linda S. McDermott
Municipal Clerk