

**BOROUGH OF RARITAN
AGENDA-WORKSHOP MEETING
AUGUST 9, 2011 ~ 7:00 PM**

The Agenda Meeting of the Borough of Raritan Council was held on August 9, 2011 in the Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869 at 7:00 pm.

Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak presided and stated: Notice of this meeting has been made by advising The Courier News and the Star Ledger of the time, date and place of this meeting, posting a notice on the official bulletin board, on the Raritan Borough website, filing a copy in the Borough Clerk's office and including this statement in the minutes.

ROLL CALL

Present: Denise Carra, Stefanie Gara, Paul Giraldi, Victor Laggini, and Anthony Soriano

Absent: Greg Lobell

Also Present: Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak; Daniel Jaxel, Borough Administrator; Stanley J. Schrek, Borough Engineer; Mark Anderson, Borough Attorney, and Rayna E. Harris, Borough Clerk

Mayor Liptak led the flag salute.

PURCHASE ORDER REQUESTS

1. Recreation: Somerset County Park Commission – TR in the amount of \$2,030.00

Councilman Anthony Soriano made a motion to approve the purchase order request. The motion to approve was seconded by Councilwoman Denise Carra. Motion carried on the following roll call vote:

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
	X	Carra	X			
		Gara	X			
		Giraldi	X			
		Laggini	X			
		Lobell			X	
X		Soriano	X			

DISCUSSION

Engineer's Report

Stanley J. Schrek offered the Engineer's Report below:

Johnson Drive Improvements

A preconstruction meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, 8/11 at 10:00am. I will advise the Council of the intended construction schedule and notify local businesses and residence accordingly. This is a NJDOT grant funded project.

Third Street

A preconstruction meeting was held on July 21. The contractor is expected to begin construction within the next week. This is a CDBG funded project with a contribution from Willow Walk.

Roderer Drive

A preconstruction meeting was held on July 21. This project has been completed. I will be processing a single payment w/Change Order for the next meeting.

Cardinal Woods

Video inspection was completed on July 8. The contractor has submitted a video record and report of the inspection. We will review these documents and formulate a strategy and costs to begin repairs.

2011 Road Program

Plans and specifications have been completed. The project will be advertised for bid later this week.

LaGrange Street Improvements

Plans and specification have been forwarded to NJDOT to review and comment as this a NJDOT funded project. Once authorized by NJDOT, this project will also be bid for expected completion in the fall.

Municipal Building PD Access and Reconfiguration

We are looking to finalize plans later this week. The location and design of handicapped access ramp is modified now that the oil tanks will be removed.

FY 2012 NJDOT Transportation Trust Fund

Applications are now available through the NJDOT SAGE website.

Categories are: Municipal Aid (Roads); Bikeways; and Safe Routes to Transit. Applications are due on 9/23.

It is recommended that we apply for funding to improve Orlando Drive from the State ROW at Route 206 to Busky Lane. As this project will be above ordinary grant requests, I recommend that we apply for only one project, in the Municipal Aid category only. This will not dilute consideration through competition on our own projects.

Complete Streets

We have completed a draft document of the Complete Streets Policy which Council authorized earlier in the year. Adoption of the Complete Streets Policy will be a significant plus toward our application for NJDOT funding of future projects. I will distribute the draft, at the meeting, for your review. Dave Maski will attend the next work meeting where this can be discussed.

Discussion on the above Engineer's report followed.

Mr. Schrek noted that two change orders would be prepared for the next Regular Meeting. The first change order would be to Z Brothers Concrete Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$3, 716.74. The second change order would be to Fred A. Cook, Jr. Inc. in the amount of \$6,624.45.

Council Member Denise Carra questioned the need for visible repair due to cracking on other streets.

Mr. Schrek answered that there are issues on many streets.

Council Member Anthony Soriano asked if there was a need to go to the State when a change order is great than 20%.

Mr. Schrek replied there is no need if the amount is under the bid threshold. He then noted that the street for the 2011 Road Program would be Avon Place, Marson Place and Ashton Street.

Council Member Stefanie Gara questioned when the renovations on the municipal building could begin.

Mr. Schrek stated that the project could begin in October.

Orlando Drive Improvements/NJDOT Local Aid Application

Mr. Schrek stated that after discussion with the county, he would like to apply for a grant for the Orlando Drive Reconstruction at this time from the State right of way through the Busky Lane intersection. He noted that there would need to be an accurate Engineer's estimate and therefore a sub-service investigation would be needed to assess the proper pavement to use on the project. The total cost of the assessment would be \$12,500; \$8,000 would come from the balance of the previous Orlando Drive grant funds and the Borough would have to fund \$4,500.

Daniel Jaxel stated that he discussed the matter with Chief Finance Officer Karin Kneafsey and they would review the budget for funds.

Council Member Soriano questioned the need for traffic and/or road safety studies.

Mr. Schrek assured the council that the Police Department already supplied the necessary information. He also noted that only one application would be submitted to increase the chance of award. Mr. Schrek stated that he would need a resolution to authorize the grant application submission at the next Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak noted that the traffic on Bell Avenue needs calming and simply having the County paint white lines to give the illusion of a narrower road for approximately \$300.

Council Member Gara questioned Police chief Mark Ciesla regarding having moveable traffic humps installed.

Chief Ciesla stated that the project is costly, but he is communicating with the County Engineer. He noted that he is exploring various options.

Council Member Paul Giraldi stated that speed bumps and humps can cause complaints.

9/11 Prayer Service/Memorial

Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak referred to the sample resolution and noted that the County would be holding a ceremony in Somerville. She inquired if the Council would like to do a separate event in Raritan. Mayor Liptak suggested extending invitations to the various religious/spiritual congregations and groups.

Council Member Soriano suggested reaching out to Fire Chief Carl Memoli.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to hold a memorial ceremony in Raritan.

Caller ID System

Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak noted that there is a need for a caller identification system on the phones in the municipal building due to the growing number of anonymous calls. She suggested that the costs be investigated. Mayor Liptak noted that sometimes callers simply forget to give a number when leaving a voice message.

Council Member Victor Laggini stated his support for the idea this year. He expressed his dismay regarding the anonymous calls, letters and e-mails. Councilman Laggini expressed that criticism and degrading language had to be stopped.

Mr. Jaxel advised the Council that there would be a cost associated with the feature and it would take time to have it installed. He asked the Council for clear direction on how to handle

anonymous calls and complaints because though he encourages people to leave their names, it is not possible to require it.

Council Member Giraldi suggested using a standard form when receiving complaints and/or concerns and accepting legitimate anonymous complaints, not those from left field.

Council Member Gara stated that when the Council establishes a policy that policy should be followed.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to get the caller I.D. system.

Green Team – Sustainable New Jersey

Mayor Liptak stated that there was a full complement of names for members except from the Seniors Club, Planning Board and Board of Health. She stated that contact would be made to get the final names.

Radio Shack Exit onto Somerset Street

Mayor Liptak expressed her concerns with the entering and exiting the Radio Shack parking lot. She stated that she spoke with Chief Ciesla to discuss an “entrance only”, no egress, on the Somerset Street side. Mayor Liptak also spoke with the County Traffic Engineer who noted a request would need to be submitted and agreed upon by the property owner.

Council Member Gara stated a bigger “Do Not Block Driveway” sign would be helpful.

Mr. Schrek stated the left turn was more of an issue in his view.

Council Member Laggini suggested the restrictions should be during heavy traffic times of the day.

Council Member Giraldi questioned the number of accidents in the location.

Chief Ciesla stated that research would be needed.

Council Member Soriano suggested having Lou Gara review the site plan for the property.

Non-residential Maintenance Code

Council Member Gara read the following summary and noted that a draft of the ordinance would be sent to the Governing Body:

Non-residential Property Code Ordinance

This Ordinance is to help protect our resident’s public health, safety and welfare as well as ensure that substandard buildings do not become a menace to the community. This shall help maintain neighborhoods and property values. This ordinance puts standards in place. Example: Exterior of structures, lawns, hedges and bushes shall be kept trimmed, exterior signs, storefronts, window displays, awnings and marquees shall be maintained in good repair. Snow, ice, garbage, weeds, etc shall be maintained. In the event the owner is not complying this shall give the Borough the authority (after proper notification) to have DPW clean and/or maintain the property. (In the event DPW cannot clean and/or maintain an outside company will be hired) The Borough will be adopting a fee schedule. The schedule shall include but not limited to the following: FEMA Rates on equipment, DPW overtime rates (DPW shall at no point maintain and/or clean any property during regular working hours) Borough Administrative Fees, etc. These charges shall then be placed as a lien on the property.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to introduce the ordinance at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Buildings, unfit

Council Member Gara read the following summary and noted that a draft of the ordinance would be sent to the Governing Body:

Buildings, Unfit

Whenever a petition is filed with the governing body by a public authority or by at least five (5) residents of the municipality, charging that any building is unfit for human habitation or occupancy or use, or whenever it appears to the governing body (on its own motion) that any building is unfit, the governing body shall send a notification containing a date for hearing. The hearing shall be before the governing body (or to its designee) to give the owner the right to file an answer and give testimony as to intentions of said building. At the time a hearing is scheduled a second notification shall be immediately forwarded to a rehabilitation sub-committee, which shall consists of the following: The Planning Board Chair, The Borough Engineer and 4 regular appointed members of the planning board. We as a governing body must take a stronger stance on these properties. We can no longer allow property owners let structures go unattended for years and years. They are a nuisance to the community and a menace to our neighborhoods as well as diminishing our property values.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to introduce the ordinance at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Property Maintenance

Council Member Gara read the following statement:

Property Maintenance

Lou Gara is seeking approval to pursue an agreement with Bridgewater to perform the rental inspections that may present a conflict for us to do with Municipal employees. If the Council approves, Lou will work out the details with Bridgewater and present it to the Council for approval.

Mayor Liptak asked why Bridgewater was selected.

Council Member Gara stated that Bridgewater was selected because there is already an agreement in place with them for UCC permit conflicts.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to pursue the agreement with Bridgewater.

Environmental Commission

Council Member Carra stated that the Environmental Commission submitted to the Planning Board the Sustainability Community Plan, but it was not approved and the plan was sent back to the Environmental Commission. The Commission would like to know what their role is in the Borough going forward.

Jim Foohey, Environmental Commission Chair, stated that the plan was returned without explanation for the rejection.

Council Member Soriano noted that this plan was better as guidance than a controlling portion of the Borough's Master Plan. He said that it was not uncommon that a plan of this nature be used separately from the Master Plan.

Mr. Schrek stated that no member of the Environmental Commission was present at the Planning Board meeting to explain the plan. He suggested that the Environmental Commission could lead the charge on sustainability within the Borough and use the plan as a good working tool.

Mayor Liptak noted that the plan was too detailed, open to misinterpretation, and the plan should be revised, pared down.

Housing Ordinance

Council Member Giraldi suggested having a progress report and meeting with the Governing Body and the inspectors to review the implementation and status of the Housing Ordinance.

Mayor Liptak suggested having all Department Heads present at the Agenda-Workshop meetings.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to have the inspectors present at the next executive session.

Route 202/First Avenue Resolution Request

Mr. Jaxel stated that the State requested a resolution in support of the changes on the highway.

There was discussion on the various flaws with the State's plan for Route 202/First Avenue.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to not entertain a resolution of support for Route 202/First Avenue.

Public Works Uniform

Mr. Jaxel reviewed two quotes for the Public Works Department uniforms and examined the proposals/quotes to ensure they were comparable. He noted that the price would be locked in for three years and Mark Anderson had no objections to the 36 month contract. Mr. Jaxel suggested accepting the Cintas quote.

Kiosk Requests – Rain Barrel, Fun Run and Tricky Tray

Mr. Jaxel asked for Council approval to post flyers in the kiosk.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to post the flyers in the kiosk.

Handicapped Parking – 38 Gaston Avenue

Mr. Jaxel reviewed the request for the Governing Body, noting that this resident is a tenant not an owner of the house. He also stated that to approve this request an ordinance and a meets/bounds would be required.

Chief Ciesla noted that this house is on a one-way street of single family homes.

Council Member Soriano suggested the homeowner be notified.

Mr. Schrek agreed to review the ordinance and supply Mr. Anderson with the necessary description.

There was general consent of the Governing Body to move forward with the process.

COMMITTEE/LIAISON AND CORRESPONDENCE DISCUSSION

Council Member Soriano stated that the Youth on Main Street Group (YOMS) is without an adviser and asked the Governing Body for names of potential candidates for the position of adviser.

Mayor Liptak noted that she may know of a person, but suggested the selected adviser submit to a background check.

Mr. Anderson advised that a background check would be appropriate.

Council Member Carra noted that the 201/2012 property tax bills were mailed out.

Council Member Laggini stated that the owner of the Raritan Laundromat, Alan Connors, passed away recently. He also expressed gratitude to the reports for articles on the Ride for Anthony event that raised funds for the college tuitions of former Councilman Tony D'Anna's children. Councilman Laggini also reported for the Board of Health (food and beverage) and Office of Vital Statistics. He stated that he was disappointed that letters were not sent to members of the Planning and Zoning Boards to gather their opinions on the merger of the boards, even though he voted in favor of the ordinance.

Councilman Laggini then questioned the need for an ASCAP license.

Mr. Anderson stated that ASCAP sent a letter to the Borough regarding obtaining a \$300 license agreement for use during Borough events, however, ASCAP is not the only licensing entity and the Borough would need multiple licenses. Also the Borough would need to be indemnified.

Mr. Jaxel suggested the DJ provide the license and include it with the fee.

Council Member Gara was in favor of purchasing the license.

Mayor Liptak stated that a letter from the School District regarding hazardous busing, but she has an issue with item #4 and she will not sign until she has the exact figures of the costs.

Council Member Gara agreed with mayor Liptak.

Mr. Jaxel stated that the School District used to send the hazardous busing in January, but he agreed to communicate to the Schools that there is no disagreement with the form or formula, but needed the exact dollar amounts.

Council Member Soriano questioned the requirements for receiving busing and noted the merit of reviewing the list of bused students.

Council Member Giraldi reported for the Basilone Parade committee, noting the schedule of events and read the following DPW report:

Raritan Borough Public Works Report for the Borough Council meeting of August 9, 2011

Picked up 72.02 tons of garbage, made 40 stops to chip brush, cut grass on all boro property, maintained all boro vehicles, repaired motor on X-Mark lawnmower, spread 5 tons of black top, cleaned and picked up garbage at all boro parks, refurbished benches at dog park

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one spoke.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
RESOLUTION 2011-08-105**

Councilwoman Stefanie Gara moved to adopt resolution 2011-08-105 and was seconded by Councilman Victor Laggini. Motion carried on the following roll call vote:

EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-7, et seq., commonly known as the “Sunshine Law”, requires that Borough Council meetings be open to the public except for the discussion of certain subjects; and

WHEREAS, the “Sunshine Law” requires that a closed session be authorized by Resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Raritan that the following portion of this meeting shall be closed to the public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the meeting shall be resumed at the end of closed session; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the subjects to be discussed and the time of public release of the minutes of the closed session are indicated below:

SUBJECT MATTER

1. Attorney-Client Privilege – Personnel Police

TIME WHEN AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE SUBJECT MATTER CAN BE DISCLOSED:

Upon authorization by the Borough Attorney

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
		Carra	X			
X		Gara	X			
		Giraldi	X			
	X	Laggini	X			
		Lobell				X
		Soriano	X			

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stefanie Gara and seconded by Councilman Victor Laggini to adjourn the Executive Session and to return to the normal order of business. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Victor Laggini moved to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Councilman Paul Giraldi. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rayna E. Harris,
Borough Clerk