

This Regular Meeting of the Borough of Raritan Council was called to order by Mayor Charles McMullin at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the Meeting Room of the Raritan Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869.

Mayor McMullin announced that the meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notices of the meeting were sent to *The Courier News* and *The Star Ledger* on January 5, 2017. In addition, notices were posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, on the Borough website and made available in the Office of the Borough Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor McMullin, Councilman Bray, Council President Carra, Councilman Carra, Councilman Foohey, Councilman Giraldi
Absent: Councilman McGinley
Also Present: Borough Administrator Jaxel, Borough Attorney Wenner, Borough Engineer Schrek, Borough Clerk Colvin

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilman Giraldi led the Invocation and Flag Salute.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2017-01-19

Executive Session:
Personnel, Contract Negotiations,
Attorney Client Privilege

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Bray, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2017-01-19.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

Council convened in Executive Session at 6:33 p.m.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Foohey, Council moved to Reconvene in Regular Session.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

Council exited Executive Session and resumed Regular Session at 7:09 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor McMullin opened this Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public wishing to speak.

Seeing no additional hands, Mayor McMullin closed this Public Comment portion of the meeting.

HABITABILITY HEARING

1. 13 East Somerset Street

Attorney Wenner said this is the continuation of the hearing that started at a Regular Meeting held November 22, 2016. Construction Official Lou Garra testified, stating he believes the property is structurally sound, but does have some property maintenance issues. He estimated the property has been vacant for approximately 17 years. Also, he said, the utilities have been disconnected for many years and the structure would require substantial renovations to get it into a position for a certificate of occupancy to be issued.

Attorney Wenner asked if having authorization to enter the property would assist Mr. Garra. Yes.

Property Owner Anthony Mulinowski entered and provided testimony.

Mr. Mulinowski said environmental testing was done in December and he is waiting for the results. He said the results should be in shortly.

Attorney Wenner asked Mr. Mulinowski to agree to allow Mr. Garra to have access to the building for inspection. He agreed.

All parties also agreed to reconvene at the February 14 Regular Meeting to continue the Habitability Hearing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 20, 2016 – Executive Session

December 20, 2016 – Regular Session

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Foohey, Council moved to Approve the Executive and Regular Session Minutes of December 20, 2016.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: N. Carra

Motion Carried: 4-0

WORK SESSION

1. Engineer's Report

Robert Bogart presented the following report on behalf of the Engineering Firm:

Bell & Sherman Avenue Improvements

Final design drawings will be submitted to NJDOT, this week, for authorization to bid. Assuming a timely review we can expect to recommend an award of contract at the February 28 meeting.

Anderson Street Fire House

A preconstruction meeting was held on Thursday, 1/5. The contractor has submitted a building permit application and will be ready to proceed upon permit approval.

401 Tillman Street

The demolition of the dwelling is now scheduled to occur during the week of January 9. The start was somewhat delayed due to coordination with the utility companies. Coordination with the Police Department and the schools has been effectuated.

Ortho Drive Pump Station

Design of the new Pump Station is proceeding.

Sewer Odor at Bell Ave./Cornell Blvd.

The Borough has been issued a Notice of Violation related to extraneous sanitary sewer flow at Bell Ave. and Cornell Blvd. This is an intermittent flow into the storm system. NJDEP is aware that the investigation is continuing.

2. Property Maintenance (DC)

Council President Carra said the Housing Committee would like a full-time person for the property maintenance officer. Current employee is retiring February 1.

3. Building and Fire Inspection Timeframe & Fees (DC)

Fire Inspection is waiting for the meeting on January 24. The Ordinance on tonight is for a first reading. It was designed to place more emphasis on owners who are not complying with inspection standards.

4. Redevelopment of 'Circle' and 'Bond Building' Properties

Mayor McMullin said the Gateway Motel and the surrounding properties, such as the 'Bond Building' at the 'Circle' make for a possible area in need of redevelopment. The Mayor asked Council to take a proactive approach in handling this area, by declaring it an area in need of a study for redevelopment.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Authorize the Planning Board to Conduct a Study to Determine whether the Area is in need of Redevelopment.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

5. Direct Install Grant Exchange (DJ)

Administrator Jaxel said this grant has been going on for 19 months. It involves electricity. Companies have changed. The Borough has committed funding. A study is being conducted. A report back to the council will happen when study results are known.

6. Veterans' Tax Exemption (DJ)

Administrator Jaxel said Assessor Stives has asked for a policy regarding tax exemption for disabled veterans. The date of when the exemption should begin is needed. A discussion was had between Mayor, Council and Administrator Jaxel on when would be best. A decision was made to make the exemption effective retroactive to January 1 of the year in which the application was submitted.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Bray, Council moved to Adopt Resolution 2017-01-22 – Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

7. Council Salaries (JF)

Councilman Foohey said salaries have only increased twice in the last 30 years and the last time was twelve years ago. The Councilman said he is proposing an increase from \$1,500.00 per year to \$3,500.00 per year for Council salaries and to \$4,000.00 from \$2,000.00 for the Mayor's salary. He said a higher salary might encourage more residents to run for office. Also, he said he feels he is an elected official and a part-time employee of the Borough. Furthermore, the Councilman said this increase will not be a tax burden.

Attorney Wenner said he would prefer a Resolution be in place. He asked for a motion to authorize a Resolution for the meeting on the 24th of this month.

On a motion by Councilman Foohey, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Authorize the preparation of a Salary Resolution for Council Salaries.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

8. Budget Meeting with Department Heads (DJ)

Administrator Jaxel asked for a date from Council to hold a Budget Meeting. Some back and forth was had as Council and Mayor examined their calendars. No decision was made, a tentative agreement was reached for Wednesday, February 1 in the evening.

ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION

Ordinance No. 2017-02

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, Amending Chapter 195, Housing Standards, Section 7, Inspections, Certificate of Rental Housing Compliance, of the Code of the Borough of Raritan

On motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Introduce Ordinance No. 2017-02.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

Mayor and Council reached an agreement on the time of the Budget Meeting on February 1 – 6:15 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution No. 2017-01-20

Appointing OEM Coordinator

Resolution No. 2017-01-21

Appointing Alt. Municipal Prosecutor

On motion by Councilman Bray, seconded by Councilman Carra, Council moved to Approve the Consent Agenda.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

PURCHASE ORDER REQUESTS

1. Fire Department – Hose Strap – Continental Fire & Safety, Inc. – \$1,513.00

On motion by Councilman Foohey, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order Request No. 1

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

2. Fire Department – Miscellaneous – New Jersey Fire Equipment – \$3,009.44

On motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Foohey, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order Request No. 2

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

3. Fire Department – Miscellaneous – Continental Fire & Safety, Inc. – \$10,061.40

On motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Foohey, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order Request No. 3

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

4. Fire Department – Equipment for Command Vehicle – Emergency Services Systems, Inc. – \$12,664.43

On motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Foohey, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order Request No. 4

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

5. Public Works – Bobcat Skid Steer Loader – Garden State Bobcat – \$44,633.94

On motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Bray, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order Request No. 5

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Bray, D. Carra, N. Carra, Foohey, Giraldi
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

OLD BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Bray – The Planning Board and Board of Health have meeting tomorrow evening here in the Municipal Building.

Council President Carra and Councilmen Giraldi and Carra had nothing to report at this time, stating their committees/boards have not yet met 2017.

Councilman Foohey – Said he will be meeting with the Superintendent of Schools soon. Also, condolences to Councilman McGinley who recently lost his father.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor McMullin opened this Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public wishing to speak. Seeing no hands, the Mayor closed this Public Comment portion.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolution No. 2016-12-189 – Executive Session – Acquisition of Real Property

On a motion by Councilman Bray, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Recorded Vote

All in Favor

Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk

Approved: _____