

CALL TO ORDER

The Annual Reorganization Meeting of the Raritan Borough Council was called to order by Mayor Zachary Bray at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the second floor Meeting Room of Borough Hall, Borough of Raritan, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

Mayor Bray read the following statement:

This Annual Reorganization Meeting was called pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate Notice of this meeting of the Governing Body was posted in Borough Hall, made available on the Borough website, in the Office of the Borough Clerk and communicated to *The Courier News*, *The Star Ledger* and *The Breeze* on December 28, 2020.

INVOCATION

Rev. Thomas Odorizzi- Catholic Church of St. Ann provided the Invocation.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Bray led all in attendance for the Salute to the Flag.

OATH OF OFFICE – COUNCIL

Councilman Nicolas Carra
Councilwoman Melissa Harris
Councilman Pablo Orozco

ROLL CALL – MAYOR & COUNCIL

Borough Administrator/Clerk Eric Colvin called the following names during Roll Call:

Present: Councilman Carra, Councilman Giraldi, Councilwoman Harris,
Councilwoman Melitsky, Councilman Orozco, Councilman Patente

Absent: x

Also Present: Mayor Bray, Borough Administrator/Clerk Eric Colvin, Borough
Attorney William Robertson and Borough Engineer Stanley Schrek

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT & OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Bray asked for a nomination for Council President.

On motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman XXX, Council moved to Elect Councilman Carra to serve as 2021 Council President.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Harris Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

MAYOR'S 2020 REMARKS

Mayor Bray delivered the following Mayor's 2021 Remarks:

Hello and Happy New Year to all! The usual well-mannered, congenial and weight free wish of “Happy New Year” feels extraordinarily different this year. 2020 will regrettably go down in history as one of the strangest, most difficult and stressful years in human existence. The Coronavirus pandemic began overseas in late 2019 and hit us here in the United States early into 2020. The world shut down. We have been confined to our own homes, whether it be alone or with family. Interaction with family, friends, colleagues and coworkers has been limited or exclusively through technology. Outside of essential and outdoor activities, most of us have experienced points of incredible difficulty and isolation. These last 10 months have not been easy. There is no way to truly sugar coat the reality of the situation. However, I am hopeful that these last 10 months have taught us valuable lessons we carry with us into 2021 and beyond. This time has taught us to not take life for granted. It has taught us to cherish our loved ones each and every day. It has taught us to be resilient. It has taught us to pay attention and take care of our health on a daily basis. Finally, it has taught us to reach out to others, support our neighbors and come together as a community as we look forward to better days ahead.

Raritan is no different than any other town across this great country. The coronavirus impacted us immensely. Hundreds of residents have contracted the virus since the onset of the pandemic. 17 fellow Raritan citizens have paid the ultimate price. Words cannot express our sorrow to those in the community and beyond affected by this pandemic. I am very proud of the governing body this past year in respect to action taken due to the pandemic. Although there may have been differing opinions here or there everything we have done and will continue to do will be with the employees’ and community’s safety in mind. I am also very thankful to our borough employees. Their ability to adjust and work from home and on a limited fashion in the building while maintaining all services to the public at the drop of the hat back in the spring was

remarkable. Their flexibility to adjust to a return to the building and opening to the public by appointment only was commendable. This year has not been easy on our employees, and we in Raritan are lucky to have some of the best public servants around. This includes our fantastic DPW, who continue to silently work behind the scenes without interruption to provide exemplary services to the citizens of Raritan. It includes our fantastic police department who have adapted to provide a top level of protection and service to our community. Finally, it includes our fantastic fire department who have similarly adjusted to new protocols in order to successfully answer the call, as they do time and time again at a high level.

The pandemic's effect did not limit itself to just the day to day operations of municipal services here in Raritan. It has affected every area and aspect of our town. Boards, committees, organizations and groups had to adapt to virtual or no meetings at all to protect the safety of its members. Recreational activities were limited or altogether canceled due to protocols and advice from health professionals. I was pleased to see the creation of two new recreational programs that fit the outdoor/safety model necessary in cross country and boot camp. I hope to see those continue into the new year once the weather warms up. I am confident as we enter the warmer months, coupled with the vaccine progress and a hopeful wane in transmission will allow a full complement of recreational opportunities for our residents, families and children who specifically are in need of socialization and activity. Another major player seriously affected by this pandemic is our business district. For a small town like Raritan with a distinct business district, the success of our town as a whole relies on the success of our main street and surrounding areas. The small business community has already withstood years of decline at the hands of major brick and mortar and online retailers. Add in a global pandemic that forced our businesses to close their doors for a long period of time and it is a recipe for disaster. I am happy

to say that our restaurants and eateries have done their best to withstand this onslaught. The governing body and employees, as well as volunteers on the Economic Development Committee did a wonderful job ensuring that outdoor eating space was permitted and created in as fast of a manner as possible. These places will continue to need our support into the New Year. We need to not lose focus on our other small business owners outside of the food service industry to make sure we are providing them with everything we can to ensure they weather this storm. We will strive to do our best to support the local business community in any way we can to limit any loss of businesses in our community. I believe that recovery is around the corner and we look forward to growth in our business community.

With the new year upon us, I want to extend sincere congratulations to Councilman Pablo Orozco on his re-election and Councilwoman Harris and Councilman Patente on their election to council. I genuinely look forward to working with each of you and the rest of the governing body this year to give our citizens the best version of Raritan possible. The new year brings hope and promise for a better and brighter future. Regrettably we must acknowledge that the coronavirus pandemic is not yet behind us. We have to continue doing our part to limit our exposure and contain transmission while hoping vaccines are successful and cure is on the horizon. We will continue to work together to ensure the safety of our employees and fellow citizens is at the forefront of each decision we make while also implementing ideas and policies for the betterment of Raritan.

ADOPTION OF 2021 GENERAL RULES OF ORDER

Mayor Bray called for a motion to adopt of the 2021 General Rules of Order, Resolution No. 2021-01-01.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2021-01-01.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Harris, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

2021 COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES

Mayor Bray acknowledged the following, 2020 Standing Committees:

Administration & Personnel	1. Council Member Patente 2. Council Member Carra
Engineering & Public Works	1. Council Member Giraldi 2. Council Member Patente
Finance	1. Council Member Carra 2. Council Member Melitsky
Police	1. Council Member Melitsky 2. Council Member Harris
Public & Private Properties	1. Council Member Harris 2. Council Member Orozco
Public Safety	1. Council Member Orozco 2. Council Member Giraldi

2021 COUNCIL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS

Mayor Bray acknowledged the following, 2021 Council Liaison Assignments:

Board of Health Municipal Court Municipal Land Use	Council Member Carra
Building Department Recreation	Council Member Melitsky
Solid Waste Advisory Committee Somerset County Waste Water Management	Council Member Orozco
Board of Education	OPEN
Basilone Parade Committee Property Maintenance	Council Member Giraldi

Environmental Commission
Office of Emergency Management

Council Member Harris

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS *without Consent of Council*

Mayor Bray announced the following appointments, which do not require Council consent:

Environmental Commission
3-year term – 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2023

Member – Emilie Stander
Member – Olga Metaxas
Alt. No. 1 – 1-year term – 1/1/2021 to
12/31/2021 – Tony Sachino

Historical & Cultural Committee
3-year term – 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2023

Member – James Fidacaro
Member–Joyce Tronolone
Member–Edward Ruzbarsky
Alt. No. 1 – 1-year term – 1/1/2021 to
12/31/2021 – Carl Memoli

Municipal Land Use Board
Terms Vary

Class I Member–Mayor Zachary Bray
Class III Member–1 year term–1/1/21 to
12/31/21–Council Member Carra
Class IV Member–3 year term–1/1/21 to
12/31/23–Thomas Brown
Class IV Member–3 year term–1/1/21 to
12/31/23

Regional Center Executive Board
1-year term, 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021

Member – Mayor Bray
Member – Nick Zamora
Member – Michael Patente
Member – Angela Knowles

Sold Waste Advisory
1-year term, 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021

Member – Councilman Orozco
Member – Robert Fulminante, Recycling
Coordinator

Somerset County Municipal Water Waste
Management Plan Committee
1-year term, 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021

Elected Official Rep – Councilman Orozco
Planning Board – Debbie Thomas
Borough Engineer – Stanley Schrek
RSA Member – Edward Machala
Recycling Coordinator – Robert Fulminante

Economic Development Committee
3-year term, 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021

Member – Brian Kroeckel
Member – Diane Lella

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS *with Consent of Council*

Mayor Bray announced the following appointments, which require Council consent:

Board of Health
3-year term, 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2023

Member – Anna Bongiovi
Member – Nina Dorey

Library Board of Trustees
5-year term, 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2025

Member–Adele Goetsch
2021 BOE Rep.–TBD

On a motion by Councilman Patente seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Approve the Appointments listed above.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Harris Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution No. 2021-01-02	Appointing Borough Attorney
Resolution No. 2021-01-03	Appointing Bond Counsel
Resolution No. 2021-01-04	Appointing Labor Counsel
Resolution No. 2021-01-05	Appointing Special Counsel
Resolution No. 2021-01-06	Appointing Registered Municipal Accountant
Resolution No. 2021-01-07	Appointing Insurance Agent
Resolution No. 2021-01-08	Appointing Municipal Prosecutor
Resolution No. 2021-01-09	Appointing Public Defender
Resolution No. 2021-01-10	Appointing Administrative Officials
Resolution No. 2021-01-11	Appointing Depositories/Financial Institutions
Resolution No. 2021-01-12	Appointing Custodians of Accounts
Resolution No. 2021-01-13	Adopting 2020 Temporary Budget

Resolution No. 2021-01-14	Fixing Interest Rates – Delinquent Taxes and Sewer
Resolution No. 2021-01-15	Canceling 2020 Property Taxes – Open Balances Less Than \$10.00
Resolution No. 2021-01-16	Designating Official Newspapers
Resolution No. 2021-01-17	Designating Paid Holidays
Resolution No. 2021-01-18	Establishing 2021 Calendar of Meetings
Resolution No. 2021-01-19	Appointing Alternate Public Defender
Resolution No. 2021-01-20	Hiring Assistant to the Tax Collector/Finance Clerk
Resolution No. 2021-01-21	Appointing QPA

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Patente, Council moved to Approve the Consent Agenda.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Giraldi, Harris, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: Carra

Motion Carried: 5-0

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Neither seeing nor hearing any member of the Public, the Mayor closed this Public Comment portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilman, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Adjourn the Meeting.

Recorded Vote

All in Favor

Motion Carried: 5-0

2021 Reorganization Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Eric M. Colvin
Borough Administrator/Clerk

Approved: _____