

This Regular Meeting of the Borough of Raritan Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Zachary Bray utilizing the Zoom virtual platform, as a result of the COVID-19 health pandemic, on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 6p.m.

The Mayor announced this Regular Meeting was called pursuant to applicable portions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice was communicated to *The Courier news*, *The Star Ledger*, and *The Breeze* on January 22, 2021, posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and on the Borough website.

ROLL CALL

Present: Council President Carra, Councilman Giraldi, Councilwoman Harris, Councilwoman Melitsky, Councilman Orozco, Councilman Patente
Also Present: Mayor Bray, Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin, Borough Attorney Robertson, Borough Engineer Schreck

Absent: None

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilman Giraldi

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2021-01-027

Entering Executive Session

1. Personnel
Administration, Property Maintenance, Recreation, Public Works
2. Potential Litigation
Bridge Walk, L.L.C, Raritan Town Center

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

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Council exited Executive Session and resumed Regular Session at 6:32 p.m.

Proclamation

HONORING ANNIE LELLA FOR HER DEDICATION, COMMITMENT & SERVICE TO RARITAN BOROUGH

WHEREAS, Annie Lella began her career with the Borough of Raritan on January 14, 1985 and will retire in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lella served as the Administrative Assistant and trusted confidant for the Borough Administrator, helping to guide the Borough in immeasurable ways throughout the decades; and

WHEREAS, as a lifelong resident, Ms. Lella's dedication and commitment to the Borough of Raritan goes well beyond what she demonstrated daily during her exemplary tenure; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Raritan is forever in debt to Ms. Lella, who worked tirelessly to ensure the satisfaction of residents, while being committed to the rich history and traditions of the Borough; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lella worked for six Mayors, countless Council members and alongside an incalculable number of Borough employees, professionals and officials.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is with great pleasure that I, Zachary R. Bray, Mayor of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, and on behalf of all of the members of the Borough Council, do honor the dedication, commitment and service of Annie Lella and hereby proclaim February 1 to be forever known as Annie Lella Day in the Borough of Raritan.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my Hand and
Affixed the Seal of the Borough of Raritan this 26th Day Of
January, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty One
Attest:

ERIC M. COLVIN
BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK

ZACHARY R. BRAY
MAYOR

ENGINEERS REPORT

To: Mayor and Council

From: Stanley J. Schrek, PE, AIA,PP,CME,LEED AP
Borough Engineer

Subject: Engineer's Report for Council Agenda-Workshop Meeting of January 26, 2021.

Date: January 23, 2021

NJTPA/NJDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

NV5 is continuing to work on the Preliminary Design Drawings for the Thompson/Anderson pedestrian routes from the NJ Transit Station to the Riverfront. Project coordination between, NV5, VCEA and NJDOT will continue throughout this process.

Orlando Drive/Somerset County Transfer

The county has requested extensive files/information/data pertaining to all recent work and improvements to Orlando Drive. All requested documentation has been submitted. Follow up documents have been requested and have been submitted. Additionally, we are preparing a preliminary design for a new DPW building to be located at the county yard in Hillsborough.

UPDATE: Awaiting approval of new location.

Regarding keeping the DPW building where it currently is, Borough Engineer Schrek said under an agreement, the building will be transferred over to the County however, the Borough will be responsible for building maintenance. He said it may be warranted to look at the option of staying in the current location but it will require some expense. He explained that there are some environmental constraints being that the building is located in a flood way. Borough Engineer Schrek said they should be able to work within the existing footprint and if staying in the current location is going to be looked into, there would need to be an environmental assessment of the interior of the building done. He said following the assessment, they would have to do a code analysis and explained that if an educated decision is going to be made on where the DPW building should be located, all possibilities should be exhausted. Borough Engineer Schrek said in order for the analysis to be done, he has to bring some consultants in. He said he has not brought anyone down to do any pricing and does not want to spend the time bringing someone in if the Borough is not sure if that is the route that will be taken. Borough Engineer Schrek said he is looking at around \$20,000.00 to do a proper investigation and then will come back to the Borough with a report on what the current public works building could or could not be. Borough Engineer Schrek said a preliminary design has already been done for a building at the County yard and said as of now; going to another property within the Borough is not going to happen in a respectable period of time. He asked that Council talk about this matter and said he will gladly proceed, and come back at the next meeting to talk about a more firm number as to what the evaluation would be for the existing public works garage.

2019 CDBG – Canal Street Sidewalk Improvements

The grant is related to the installation of ADA ramps and sidewalk at the intersections of Loomis and Doughty Streets. The Bid Opening was held November 19th. Of 10 bids received, Your Way

Construction of Irvington, is the lowest responsible bidder with a total base bid of \$46,743.06.
Project on hold for winter.

2020 CDBG

The subgrant agreement has been completed and returned to Somerset County for execution. The \$77,442 grant will be utilized for sanitary sewer investigation and repairs. Proceeding with design/specs.

2019 & 2020 NJDOT – Woodmere and Weiss

Project completes. Processing final submittals.

Columbus Avenue

The project is complete. Processing final submittals.

Bell Avenue

Video inspection in progress.

LaGrange Street Redevelopment

Planning work is proceeding. The Planning Board Attorney, Planner and this office has prepared a draft plan which will be reviewed by the Planning Board. The Planning Board review has been delayed due to Right of Way Issues. No further progress to date.

Block 81

VCEA has reviewed work required to winterize both Second Avenue and Third Street which includes asphalt repairs along the existing curb. Contractor is working with Project Engineer to finalize construction drawings related to the pedestrian walkway from Second Avenue to NJ Transit.

LabCorp

Sitework is progressing.

J&J

Sitework is progressing.

The Learning Center

Final CO issued

Raritan Johnson Associates

Site work is substantially complete.

MINUTES

January 12, 2021- Regular Session

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Approve Minutes for January 12, 2021

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

WORK SESSION

1. Banner Catholic Schools Weeks (EC)

Borough Administrator Colvin said there will be a banner on display in honor of Catholic Schools Week.

2. Drop Box (EC)

Borough Administrator Colvin said he would like to remind the residents that there is a new drop box outside of Borough Hall. He said it is closer to the street and more secure than the previous box that was being used. Borough Administrator Colvin said the drop box is checked multiple times throughout the day and said that any correspondence that needs to be brought to Borough Hall can be left in the drop box. He also said that there are phone numbers and extension posted on the door at Borough Hall if any resident needs to contact specific departments while the building is still closed to the public.

3. Communication (PO)

Councilman Orozco said there was a communications issue that occurred recently and would like to clear it up. The Councilman said there was a posting on the Police Department website that was put up prematurely. The Councilman said he wanted to assure the residents that the posting was a mistake and has since been taken care of.

Mayor Bray said he had three appointments to various boards and commissions that required confirmation of Council.

The Mayor said the first appointment is Barrett Windrem as an alternate on the Planning Board.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Confirm Appointment of Barret Windrem as Alternate on the Planning Board

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Mayor Bray then asked for confirmation for Sherry Strauss as a full-time member to the Economic Development Committee.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Patente, Council moved to Confirm Appointment of Sherry Strauss as Full Time Member on the Economic Development Committee.

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Mayor Bray asked for confirmation for Jenny Rose Saunders as an alternate to the Environmental Commission.

On a motion by Councilwoman Harris, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Confirm Appointment of Jenny Rose Saunders as Full Time Member on the Environmental Commission.

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

ORDINANCE-FINAL READING AND PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance No. 2021-01

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan,
County of Somerset, State of New Jersey
Amending and Modifying Chapter 5,
Boards, Committees, and Commissions, of
the Code of the Borough of Raritan

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Patente, Council moved to Open Ordinance No. 2021-01 to Members of the Public

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain:

Absent:
Motion Carried: 6-0

Mayor Bray opened Public Comment for any member of the Public wishing to be heard.

Neither seeing nor hearing any member of the Public, Mayor Bray closed Public hearing.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Patente, Council moved to Adopt Ordinance No. 2021-01

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution No. 2021-01-028	Authorizing the Execution of an Agreement for Payroll Services- R&L DATACENTERS Inc.
Resolution No. 2021-01-029	Authorizing the Execution of an Agreement for Animal Control Services – Animal Control Solutions
Resolution No. 2021-01-030	Authorizing the Execution of an agreement for Information Technology Services – KRS IT Consulting
Resolution No. 2021-01-031	Authorizing the Execution of an Agreement for Canal Street
Resolution No. 2021-01-032	Authorizing the Disposition of Certain Unneeded Police Department Equipment
Resolution No. 2021-01-033	Approving Participation in a Joint Insurance Fund-2021-2023
Resolution No. 2021-01-034	Entering Into Interlocal Agreement with Borough of Somerville Shared Property Maintenance

Mayor Bray asked if any member of Council would like to pull any Resolutions from the Consent Agenda to vote on separately.

Councilman Patente said he would like to pull Resolution 2021-01-128.

Councilman Patente said he would like to know why there are changes being made to the General Rules of Order.

Councilman Giraldi said it is a matter of being able to grant preferential treatment to certain Liaisons of companies who have been involved with the Borough for several years.

Councilman Patente said historically on the Liaison Committees, there has always been a First and a Second. The Councilman said the First has always been the person who would work directly with the Department, and the second would fill in only if needed. He said a change was made to rename the First and Second to Chair, and Vice Chair. Councilman Patente said changes were agreed upon to allow Liaisons to work as “Co-chairs” however, no such changes were made.

Councilman Giraldi said changes were made to satisfy complaints and said the matter should be voted on to allow for Council to decide.

Councilman Patente said before a vote is taken, there are other issues with the General Rules of Order that he would like to discuss. He said there was an issue with the names listed for “2021 Borough Council” and he also said there seems to be confusion with what each Committee is responsible for. Councilman Patente said based on the inconsistencies with the General Rules of Order, he would like to table.

On a motion made by Councilman Patente to Table the Adoption of Resolution 2021-01-028.

Hearing no motion to second, Mayor Bray moved to hold discussions for Resolution 2021-01-028.

On a motion made by Councilman Orozco to end discussions on Resolution 2021-01-028.

Mayor Bray said he had additional comments to add before entertaining the motion to close discussions. The Mayor said he had a problem with the wording of a portion of the General Rules of Order and recited the portion to which he was referring. Mayor Bray said the wording would have an affect on several committees as they now stand and affect what committees future Council Presidents can serve on.

A discussion ensued between Mayor and Council and ended with a motion by Councilman Orozco to close discussions and move to Adopt Resolution 2021-01-028.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Adopt Resolution 2021-01-028

Recorded Vote:

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

Nay: Patente

Abstain: x

Absent: x
Motion Carried: 5-1

Mayor Bray said Resolution 2021-01-034 has been tabled and requires further discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Approve the Consent Agenda – Resolutions 2021-01-029 through 2021-01-033.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Harris, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: x
Motion Carried: 6-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2021-01-035

Approving Bill List

Mayor Bray asked if any members of the Council had any questions. Neither seeing nor hearing any member of Council, Mayor Bray asked for a motion to approve the bill.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilwoman Harris, Council moved to approve Resolution No. 2021-01-035.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Harris, Orozco, Melitsky, Patente
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: x
Motion Carried: 6-0

PURCHASE ORDER(S)

1. DiFrancesco, Bateman, Kunzman – Legal Fees – \$9,417.44

On a motion made by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order No. 1.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Harris, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: x
Motion Carried: 6-0

2. Automatic Communication Alarm – Alarm Maintenance – \$5,138.00

On a motion made by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order No. 2.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

3. Pumping Services – Service to Borough Pump Stations – \$6,547.80

On a motion made by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilwoman Harris, Council moved to Approve Purchase Order No. 3.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Council President Carra – Council President Carra said there is an opening on the Board of Health and said if any member of Council knows of anyone who would be interested in the position, to please make Mayor Bray aware. Council President Carra also said the Board of Health held a discussion regarding Alternate Members and said it was something the Board would be interested in looking into. The Council President also said the Board of Health is discussing the possibility of establishing a Food Pantry in Raritan. Council President Carra said the County Health Department is trying to increase the number of COVID-19 Vaccines. Lastly, Council President Carra said the Planning Board will be holding their meeting on Zoom Wednesday, January 27, at 6:30 and said there was a Budget Meeting coming up on Tuesday, February 2.

Councilman Giraldi – Councilman Giraldi said he had nothing new to report.

Councilwoman Harris – Councilwoman Harris said the Environmental Commission had their first meeting of the year on January 21 and said one of their goals for 2021 is to obtain Certification. She said the EC would like to let everyone know that they held a tree planting near the Basilone Statue and are looking for volunteers to help with future tree planting.

Councilwoman Harris said the Environmental Commission is getting LED light bulbs distributed through the Somerset County Green Leadership Hub and said date and location are still being decided on. The Councilwoman said the Environmental Commission is continuing the Tree Seedling Campaign through the New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign. Councilwoman Harris also said she spoke with the Officer of Emergency Management regarding COVID-19 Vaccines for First Responders.

Councilwoman Melitsky – Councilwoman Melitsky said the Building Department conducted 54 inspections in the last two weeks and 2 certificates were issued. She said total construction cost was \$12,500.00 and there were no certificate fees collected.

Councilman Orozco – Councilman Orozco said he had nothing new to report for the Board of Education or the Fire Department. For Public Safety, the Councilman said they are still engaging interest on the neighborhood watch and asked that anyone who is interested in participating reach out to him by email.

Councilman Patente – Councilman Patente said there was a meeting for the Somerset Regional Partnership where discussions were held regarding Legislative changes to the Grow New Jersey Programs in which changes may be made to grants and job retention. He said there is a Special Meeting being held next week to further discuss the changes. Councilman Patente said the Historical Committee has had an agreement for drawings so work can begin on more benches for Somerset Street and the Drop Box at Borough Hall. The Councilman also said the Historical Committee is working on getting a trolley display and said they have elected a new Chairperson and Vice President. Councilman Patente said if anyone has any historical pictures or artifacts, the Committee is always looking for donations. For the Department of Public Works, Councilman Patente said they have picked up garbage, cleaned storm drains, assisted with construction in the Police Station, and salted the roads.

Mayor Bray- Mayor Bray gave an update on the COVID-19 numbers. He said there are a total of 410 total cases in Raritan which is an increase of 30 new cases since the last report. Mayor Bray also said the Borough Calendars are now available and can be picked up at the library. He also said he will coordinate with the Senior Citizens to get calendars to anyone who does not feel comfortable going to the library.

PUBLIC COMMENT

(In accordance with Section 29-1 of the Code of the Borough of Raritan, there shall be a five-minute limit per speaker)

Mayor Bray opened Public Comment for any member of the Public wishing to be heard.

Adele Goetsch- Ms. Goetsch said was disappointed with behaviors that she saw at the meeting.

Colleen Kempe- Ms. Kempe said she had a few questions and began by asking for clarification regarding the funds that were discussed at the previous meeting.

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the grant that was discussed at the previous meeting is money that is coming from the County which is still pending awaiting authorization from HUD.

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said once the funds are allocated, the Borough will be able to use it for food insecurities and wellness.

Council President Carra said the Board of Health have been discussing locations for a potential food bank in Raritan.

Ms. Kempe said there are currently 49 children at the JFK school who are food insecure and said in addition to needing food, many people are also in need of refrigerators. Ms. Kempe said a refrigerator donation would be extremely helpful to those in need. She then asked about the status of the Borough Recreation Department

Mayor Bray said the interview process for a new Recreation Director is ongoing. The Mayor said he understands this is a time sensitive matter and a candidate will be presented to the Governing Body by the following Council Meeting.

Jim Foohey- Mr. Foohey said he wanted to wish Annie Lella good luck and good health on her retirement. He also said a decision has not been made regarding a town wide garage sale and cited COVID-19 concerns as the reason for the delay. He said a decision will be made by March 1. Mr. Foohey also said the discussion about the General Rules of Order was confusing and asked for clarification on what changes were made. He also said discussion being held during Council Meetings should be kept peaceful.

Kellyann Gallagher- Ms. Gallagher said she wanted to thank Council President Carra for the update he gave on the food bank. She said she would like to help as much as possible while the Borough waits on funds to assist food insecure residents. Ms. Gallagher also said she would like to discuss some of the requirements and standards regarding Summer Camp.

Neither seeing nor hearing any member of the Public, Mayor Bray closed Public Comment Session.

Council then motioned to re-enter Executive Session.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Re-enter Executive Session

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent:

Motion Carried: 6-0

REGULAR MEETING ADJOURNMENT

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

Recorded Vote:

All in favor

Motion Passed: 6-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:14pm

Ashley Kurbanoglu,
Deputy Clerk

Approved: _____