

This Regular Meeting of the Borough of Raritan Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Zachary R. Bray in the Meeting Room of the Raritan Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869 at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 17, 2021.

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 August 11, 2021, 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 Bray, Council President Carra, Councilman Giraldi, Councilwoman Melitsky, Councilman Orozco, Councilman Patente
Also Present: Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin, Borough Assistant Administrator/Assistant CFO Cook-Vitale, Borough Attorney Robertson
Absent: Councilman Ifan

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilman Orozco

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2021-08-134

Entering Executive Session

1. Personnel
Administration, Public Works
2. Contract Negotiations
10 West Somerset
3. Attorney Client
Hidden Pond, NJ Transit

On a motion by Councilman Patente, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2021-08-134.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

Council convened in Executive Session at 6:34 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNMENT

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

Recorded Vote

All in Favor

Motion Carried: 4-0

Council exited Executive Session and resumed Regular Session at 7:05 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Tax Bills & Grace Period (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin asked the mayor to remind everyone that the third quarter taxes grace period goes to Monday, August 23rd, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Food Pantry Presentation (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin hands over the topic to Kellyann Gallagher, with the Raritan Food Pantry, who delivered a PowerPoint presentation related to the Food Pantry. Among the many statistics, Ms. Gallagher cited having served more than 140 households, mostly all families from Raritan, with a handful from Bridgewater. According to Ms. Gallagher the pantry averages 66 families per month – 61 percent of whom have children. She said the pantry has grown since it began and funding is becoming increasingly more difficult, especially because grant money received will not cover certain expenses.

Ultimately, Ms. Gallagher asked Mayor and Council for funding to cover unanticipated expenses that she estimated to be roughly \$2,500 to \$5,000. Also, she asked for an additional \$12,000 to cover 2022 rent, as well as other funding for other items and expenses she deems necessary.

Mayor Bray thanked Ms. Gallagher and all the volunteers for what he referred to as amazing work for the community. Councilwoman Melitsky joined in to thank the pantry volunteers as well, adding that she loves to volunteer there when possible.

2. EDC Christmas Market – Road Closure Request (MP)

Councilman Patente stated that the Economic Development Commission just had a wonderful Discovering Raritan Day, adding that the EDC plans to have another Raritan event, a Christmas Market. Using the grant they received from the council, the market will be held on Saturday, December 4th, 2021, and they request the road closures of: Canal Street and possibly Nevius Street. Councilman Patente added that the Chief of police has approved these road closures. Councilman Giraldi asked how much of Canal Street would be closed off and Councilman Patente said from the Nevius Bridge down to the Basilone Statue.

On a motion by Councilman Patente, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve Road Closure Request of Canal Street and possibly Nevius Street.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

3. September Meeting Date (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that there is a date conflict with the September 14th Council meeting, suggesting two alternative dates: Monday, September 13th or Thursday, September 16th. A brief decision among the Governing Body ensued and Monday, September 13th was chosen, with Councilman Patente adding that he would be missing that meeting.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Authorize the Council Meeting Date Change to Monday, September 13th.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: Patente

Motion Carried: 4-0

4. OEM Coordinator (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin announced that the Borough has hired a new OEM Coordinator – Raritan Police Officer Detective Benjamin Griffin has offered to take on this new position. Colvin went on to state that there will be a resolution for Griffin's appointment later this meeting.

5. Somerset County Open Space Grant (PO)

Councilman Orozco states that there are Open Space Grants available through the County that he would like to utilize them for Raritan Recreation updates. Adding that he has seen other neighboring towns Recreation updates made possible by these grants and wants to investigate when the application deadlines and vote deadlines for these grants would be. A quick discussion between the Governing Body resulted in agreeance that Borough Engineer Schrek would need to be brought into the discussion at a later time, with Mayor Bray adding that he likes the idea of a Splash Park.

6. September 11th – 20th Anniversary Tribute (PO)

Councilman Orozco starts off by stating that unfortunately this year is the 20th Anniversary of September 11th and in honor of that he proposed setting up a two-beam light display similar to the one in NYC as a tribute. There was an informal consensus that this was a good idea.

7. Veteran Preferred Parking (JM)

Councilwoman Melitsky wants to express her appreciation for those who served our country by providing a Veteran Preferred Parking spot at Borough Hall. Adding that she is aware of our limited parking situation and that in the future at our new Emergency Complex she would like to see an increase in the number of Veteran parking spots available as a small token of appreciation. Councilman Giraldi agrees this is a good idea, stating that he saw a Veterans Parking spot at the Flemington Lowes for the first time recently. A short discussion between the Governing Body took place in regards to handicap spots versus the Veteran Preferred Parking spot.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Approve a Veteran Preferred Parking Sign at Borough Hall.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

8. Eagle Scout Little Library Project (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin states that the Eagle Scouts together with the Raritan Library would like to set up six remote libraries throughout town, one next to the drop box at the Municipal Building, one next to the little league baseball field, the one next to Nevius bridge and Mill Street, one behind the Raritan Library next to the gazebo, and one in Basilone Park by JFK School near the park sign. Mayor Bray stated that he got to see this project unfold from the very beginning and noted the amazing craftsmanship of these “little libraries” that look like miniatures of our very own Raritan Library. The little libraries will be installed with the help of Public Works. There was a brief discussion about where the sixth location should be between the Mayor and former Councilman James Foohey. Mayor suggested Council vote on the installation of the five known locations of the Little Libraries and allow the Library Board of Trustees to further research where the sixth box should go.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Authorize Installation of 5 Little Libraries.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING & PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance No. 2021-11

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, Amending to Amend Schedule E (One-Way Streets) in Chapter 82 (Vehicles and Traffic) of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Raritan

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded Council President Carra, Council moved to Open Public Hearing Ordinance No. 2021-11.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

Joe Kempe, 114 Sherman Ave. – Mr. Kempe said that when Second Avenue was converted to a one-way the traffic opened up due to the loss of cut-through traffic. Mr. Kempe said he believes converting back to a two-way street would cause early hour commuters to cut through the neighborhood thereby endangering school children. He also added concern related to possible traffic caused by Raritan Crossings, instead suggesting to keep it as a one-way and have the new apartment traffic go straight to the light at First Ave.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve Ordinance No. 2021-11.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

Ordinance No. 2021-12

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, Amending Chapter 248, Peace and Good Order of the Code of the Borough of Raritan

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Open Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 2021-12.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

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

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Adopt Ordinance No. 2021-12.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Carried: 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

(Resolution Nos. 2021-08-135 – 2021-08-140)

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <u>Resolution No. 2021-08-135</u> | Appointing OEM Coordinator |
| <u>Resolution No. 2021-08-136</u> | Approving Liquor License Transfer – 1816-44-003 |
| <u>Resolution No. 2021-08-137</u> | Approving Liquor License Transfer – 1816-44-004 |
| <u>Resolution No. 2021-08-138</u> | Approving Liquor License Renewal – 1816-33-011 |
| <u>Resolution No. 2021-08-139</u> | Authorizing Refund – Baseball Registration |
| <u>Resolution No. 2021-08-140</u> | Refunding Tax Overpayment – Somerset County |

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

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

Mayor Bray then asks to make a motion on an action, ending the seasonal DPW position, that was made earlier in Executive Session.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve End the Seasonal DPW Position.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2021-08-141 Approving Bill List

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2021-08-141 – Bill List.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

PURCHASE ORDER REQUESTS

1. Roof for Anderson Street Firehouse – MFA, LLC. – \$7,565.00

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Approve the PO for New Roof at Anderson Street Firehouse.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

2. Sanitary Sewer Cleaning, Inspection & Disposal for Meehan & Helene – National Water Main Cleaning – \$8,010.00

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve PO for Sanitary Sewer Cleaning, Inspection & Disposal for Meehan & Helene.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

3. Sanitary Sewer Cleaning, Inspection & Disposal for – National Water Main Cleaning – Colby, Berwick, Avonridge & Brentwood – \$15,770.00

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve PO for Sanitary Sewer Cleaning, Inspection & Disposal for Colby, Berwick, Avonridge & Brentwood.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Giraldi, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Council President Carra – Council President Carra said the Planning Board will meet on Wednesday, August 25th at Borough Hall at 6:30/7pm. He also said that the Board of Health did not meet this month, adding that their next meeting will be Wednesday, September 8th at 7pm.

Councilman Giraldi – Councilman Giraldi said that DPW have been replacing trees on Main Street, completing spot road repairs and they will be changing out some street signs, including Somerset Street and First Avenue. He also mentioned that the Basilone Meeting scheduled for tomorrow, Wednesday August 18th, 2021, has been cancelled.

Councilwoman Melitsky – Councilwoman Melitsky started off by saying she attended the Raritan Police and Fire Departments National Night Out and that they had many activities that were

enjoyed by all. She was also honored to be present at two ribbon cuttings to welcome The Crossings at Raritan Station and Michael's Char Broiled Grill.

Councilwoman Melitsky also went on to say that the Discovering Raritan event was a huge success and there were many fantastic Raritan Businesses that were well represented. Over 4,000 people were estimated to attend this event. The Councilwoman said the Raritan Food Pantry continues to provide food and other supplies to those in need and she has been her pleasure volunteering with them.

Councilwoman Melitsky said she wanted to extend her appreciation to all those involved in extinguishing two recent massive structure fires in Raritan – adding that not enough credit can be given to the Raritan Fire Department volunteers. She then read a personal message from Joanne Rodrigues, the daughter of the Canal Street fire residents, which expressed her gratitude and thanks to all those who came to help her family in their emergency – specifically calling out Tom McDonald from the Fire Prevention Department, the Raritan Police Officers present during and after the fire and the Red Cross Team. Ms. Rodrigues extends her blessings to all those involved.

Councilwoman Melitsky went on to report that the Raritan Police Department underwent the Bi-Annual Municipal Detention Facility Inspection in July, which revealed that they are in full compliance New Jersey State statutes. She also stated that the Raritan Police assisted with the Discovering Raritan event as traffic and crowd control, adding that a few off-duty officers ran the Raritan PBA Local 82 beer tent. She said the event was a tremendous success, and the Police were happy to report zero incidents that required any Police involvement.

Councilwoman Melitsky went on to report that also in July, our Raritan Police Department were present at a media event called Operation Helping Hand at the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office. Operation Helping Hand is a mobile outreach program for members of Somerset County that need assistance.

Councilwoman Melitsky had a few updates for the Recreation Department which included the closing of the Raritan Public Pool on this Friday, August 20, 2021 – adding a big thanks to the summer help. She also mentioned that kickball has begun with 47 children who have signed up. A self-defense class will be held on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, with Lt. Lisa Gill Murray (sp) from the Prosecutor's Office being the facilitator. Councilwoman Melitsky also added that cross-country will also be starting soon.

Councilman Orozco – Councilman Orozco stated that the Raritan Fire Chief asked him to share that they have been on eight calls in the past week – Councilman Orozco adding Fire Department volunteers have been working hard. They reported to two two-alarm fires, one of which was previously mentioned by Councilwoman Melitsky, as well as a fire that took place in Hillsborough. The Raritan Fire Department have been on 129 calls to date so far this year.

Councilman Orozco said he has spoken with the Board of Education representative about how this coming school year will go. Adding that they discussed all the challenges that parents have faced over this past year, including financial hardships. He also stressed to the BOE that all their decisions affect the parents heavily and he asked them to consider the parents when making

decisions. Councilman Orozco was pleased to hear that the BOE will be looking out for the parents and that parents will have a say.

Councilman Patente – Councilman Patente did not have any meetings this month, but he did thank Councilwoman Melitsky for talking about the ribbon cuttings and the Discovering Raritan Event.

Mayor Bray – Mayor Bray wanted to echo a few previous statements made by Council – starting with the Discovering Raritan event, he stated that it was a huge success and quite impressive this year. He also attended the Raritan Police and Fire Departments National Night Out, adding that the Police and Fire departments did a great job for the Raritan Community. He gave a big thank you to the Raritan Fire Department for not only their recent work over the past ten days but also for their continued protection of Raritan. Since Mayor Bray missed the last council meeting, he wanted to take a moment to comment on the loss of a very important Raritan Community Member, Pat Mastice, who had lived in Raritan for quite some time, served our country, served on the Basilone Parade Committee for decades, as well as many other roles in town. The Mayor added that he will be a Raritan Community member that will be greatly missed.

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.

Former Mayor Anthony DeCicco, Anderson Street – The former Mayor asked Councilman Patente if he approved that Second Street be turned back into a two-way street. Councilman Patente stated that he understands Mr. Kempe’s sentiments on keeping Second Street a one-way but in the end thinks that would cause too many issues leaving the apartment complex only one way out of their parking garage – which is why he voted to approve Ordinance No. 2021-11 along with the rest of council. Former Mayor DeCicco went on to say that he agrees with Mr. Kempe that Second Street in front of the school should stay a one-way and that it is much safer for the school to avoid First Ave. He went on to say that motorists to do obey the 25mph speed limit on that First Ave., noting that Immaculata High School had the same issue but have the cooperation of the Police Department.

The former mayor added that he believes the Mayor should verbally list out who is involved in any liquor license transfers since there are ordinances that stipulate where you can move a liquor license to. Mayor Bray made a note of that for future meetings. Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that both of the liquor license transfers in this meeting were just ownership transfers. Former Mayor DeCicco voiced his opinion on looking out for the Borough in case someone has an objection to a transfer later down the road.

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

REGULAR MEETING ADJOURNMENT

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

Recorded Vote:

All in Favor

Motion Passed: 5-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Alyssa Cornella
Administrative Assistant

Approved: _____
Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: _____