

This Regular Meeting of the Borough of Raritan Governing Body was called to order by Councilman Paul Giraldi in the Meeting Room of the Raritan Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869 at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, 2021.

The Councilman 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 30, 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 *entered during Executive Session, Councilman Giraldi, Councilman Ifan, Councilwoman Melitsky, Councilman Orozco
Also Present: Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin, Borough Attorney Robertson, Borough Engineer Schrek
Absent: Council President Carra, Councilman Patente

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilman Orozco

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2021-09-142

Entering Executive Session

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

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2019-09-142.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 4-0

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilman Ifon, 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. EDC Christmas Market – Date Change (EC)
Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the EDC has requested a date change for their Christmas Market to December 11 from December 4 and asked Council for approval.
Mayor Bray mentioned a similar event is happening in Somerville on December 4.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Giraldi, Council moved to Approve the Date Change for the EDC Christmas Market to December 11.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 4-0

2. Open Space Grant Funding (PO)
Councilman Orozco said he would like for Council to be aware that funding is available through the County as part of the Open Space Program and a shovel-ready project is required.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Tree Planting @ Frelinghuysen (ZB)
Mayor Bray said the Borough lost a resident during Storm Ida and several members of the Governing Body attended a vigil in Bridgewater recently.

The Mayor said he spoke with the family and would like to have a tree planted in memory of the Raritan resident who passed away, adding he would like for the tree to be planted sometime this fall.

There was some discussion about what type of tree should be planted with all members agreeing to defer to Public Works and/or the local Agway.

2. Block 81 & Train Station Parking (ZB)
Mayor Bray said the Borough received a request from a resident of Crossings at Raritan Station who would like to have off-street parking.

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the physical address of Crossings is 2nd Avenue so the residents, according to the Borough Code, are entitled to off-street parking on 2nd Avenue, but would also like to park on 3rd Street, which is the front of the building.

Mayor Bray said he is of the opinion that he would not like to see the current Code amended to allow for 3rd Street parking.

Councilwoman Melitsky asked whether it would make sense to allow for those residents to park on the northern side of 3rd Street.

Mayor Bray said Crossings are charging a monthly fee for parking, to which Engineer Schrek stated the owners of the building are required to provide parking at a rate of 1.4 spaces per unit, adding any revisions to parking should be referred to the Planning Board. Engineer Schrek said other parking issues may exist in that area, including whether to have dedicated spaces for Uber drivers.

Mayor Bray questioned whether the owners of Crossings are allowed to charge for parking, to which Engineer Schrek said the original site plan requires residents to park in the parking garage.

A conversation between members of Council, Attorney Robertson, Engineer Schrek and Administrator/Clerk Colvin ensued about how best to proceed when requests for off-street parking are received from residents of Crossings. All parties were in agreement that the issued should be handled by the Planning Board.

3. Parking Enforcement – Shared Services (JI)

Councilman Ifon said he is considering into having a shared service with neighboring Somerville for parking enforcement and had asked Administrator/Clerk Colvin look into it.

Councilman Orozco said he believes a shared parking enforcement scenario with Somerville would benefit the Borough, adding the Police Department is busy with other responsibilities.

Mayor Bray asked for an informal consensus among Council members to authorize Administrator/Clerk Colvin to discuss the potential of a shared service with Somerville.

4. Waive Permit Fees for Storm Damage (PO)

Councilman Orozco proposed waiving construction permit fees for those residents whose homes were damaged by Storm Ida.

Administrator/Clerk Colvin suggested a deadline for the submissions. Mayor and Council agreed on Dec. 31, 2021.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Waive Permit Fees Related to Damaged Caused by Storm Ida.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 4-0

5. Library Board of Trustees Appointment (ZB)

Mayor Bray said an appointment is needed on the Library Board of Trustees. The Mayor nominated Anne-Marie Meade.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Appoint Anne-Marie Meade to the Library Board of Trustees.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 4-0

6. Block Party Permit Application – Brentwood Road (EC)

Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the Borough received an application for a Block Party on Brentwood Road on October 9, adding a motion is needed for the corresponding road closures.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Ifon, Council moved to Approve the Block Party and Road Closure for Brentwood Road.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 4-0

7. Property Tax Reward Program (JI)

Councilman Ifon said he would like to have a Property Tax Reward Program (PTRP) in the Borough. A PTRP provides residents with money back on their taxes when they shop locally at participating businesses.

Administrator/Clerk Colvin said other municipalities in the State, including some locally, have PTRPs.

There was some discussion among the Governing Body regarding the program. Ultimately, Mayor Bray asked Administrator/Clerk Colvin to investigate a PTRP.

8. Buildings & Grounds Maintenance (PO)

Councilman Orozco said he is concerned about the conditions of some of the Borough's buildings and grounds, especially following Storm Ida. There was a brief exchange between Councilman Orozco and Administrator/Clerk Colvin regarding the public facilities. The exchange was inaudible.

CONSENT AGENDA

(Resolution Nos. 2021-09-143 – 2021-09-148)

Resolution No. 2021-09-143

Authorizing Funding Agreement – LaGrange, LLC.

Resolution No. 2021-09-144

Approving Liquor License Renewal of Inactive – 1816-44-007-004 – Amrutha, LLC.

Resolution No. 2021-09-145

Authorizing Tax Overpayment Refund – B 85 L 8

Resolution No. 2021-09-146

Authorizing Tax Overpayment Refund – B 1 L 1.18

Resolution No. 2021-09-147

Appointing Dave Myers – Permanent Electrical Subcode

Resolution No. 2021-09-148

Certifying Annual Audit

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

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Passed: 4-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2021-09-149

Approving Bill List

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Ifon, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2021-09-149 – Bill List.

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Passed: 4-0

PURCHASE ORDER REQUESTS

1. Lavery, Selvaggi & Abromittis – Legal Fees – \$5,399.50

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

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Passed: 4-0

2. BCI Burke – Playground Equipment – \$8,593.16

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

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Passed: 4-0

3. Emergency Accessories & Installation – Lights & Lettering – \$13,030.98

Mayor Bray asked what the lights and lettering PO is for, to which Administrator/Clerk Colvin said police vehicles.

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

Recorded Vote:

Yea: Giraldi, Ifon, Melitsky, Orozco
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Motion Passed: 4-0

COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Giraldi – Councilman Giraldi said the Department of Public Works has been busy collecting bulk after Storm Ida. The Councilman said the Annual Basilone Parade is scheduled to take place this coming weekend.

Councilwoman Melitsky – Councilwoman Melitsky extended her condolences to the Raritan family who lost their loved one in Storm Ida. The Councilwoman thanked the first responders and DPW workers for their Storm Ida work, adding the fire department also donated to the Raritan Food Pantry. The Raritan Senior Citizens are again meeting, the councilwoman said, and new members are welcome and the Recreation Department is offering a self-defense class. The Police Department, she said, hosted National Night Out in August, which was a success. The Councilwoman said Recreation soon starting t-ball and cross country programs.

Councilman Ifon – Councilman Ifon said he had nothing to report for the Environmental Commission. He also extended his condolences to the family who lost their loved one, as well as everyone who was impacted by Storm Ida. The Councilman said he appreciates everyone who assisted others.

Councilman Orozco – Councilman Orozco thanked the employees who assisted others during Storm Ida – police, fire and DPW. The Councilman said the Fire Department has responded to 211 calls and performed a host of rescuing measures during the storm. Lastly, the Councilman said the Raritan app is ready for download.

Mayor Bray – The Mayor said he looked around town the morning after Storm Ida and witnessed boats rescuing people on Somerset Street. That said, the Mayor said, Raritan was fortunate overall in comparison to neighboring municipalities. The Mayor then read a letter he received that thanked first responders and thanked them personally, as well.

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.

Joe Kempe, 114 Sherman Avenue: Mr. Kempe encouraged residents to waive hello to the Bike Train, which is entering its fifth year to the JFK Elementary School. He also asked drivers to pay attention and observe the rules of the road for everyone's safety.

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

REGULAR MEETING ADJOURNMENT

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

Recorded Vote:

All in Favor

Motion Passed: 4-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Alyssa Cornella
Administrative Assistant
Office of the Borough Clerk

Approved: _____
Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: _____