

This Regular Meeting of the Borough of Raritan Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Zachary Bray in the Meeting Room of the Raritan Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869 at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 28, 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 September 23, 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 Ifan, Councilwoman Melitsky, Councilman Orozco, Councilman Patente
Also Present: Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin, Borough Assistant Administrator/Assistant CFO Cook-Vitale, Borough Attorney Robertson, Borough Engineer Schrek
Absent: Councilman Giraldi

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Council President Carra

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2021-09-150

Entering Executive Session

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

On a motion by Councilman Ifan, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Enter Executive Session.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Ifan, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

Council convened in Executive Session at 6:32 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: 5-0

Council exited Executive Session and resumed Regular Session at 7:06 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Buildings & Grounds Maintenance (PO)**
Councilman Orozco said he wanted to follow up on the last meeting to make sure the Borough has a plan set up to winterize the pools. He also confirmed that there aren't any new buildings since the last meeting that need repairs from storm Ida.

2. **Open Space Grant Funding (PO)**
Councilman Orozco said he wanted to make sure the Open Space Grant stayed on the Governing Body's radar, adding that one project was discussed in this meeting's Executive Session and would hopefully become public soon. Councilman Orozco also stated that the Open Space Grant offers money he would like to take advantage of for some Capital Projects for the Borough.

3. **Parking Enforcement – Shared Services (JI)**
Councilman Ifan said last meeting he asked Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin to ask Somerville Police Department if they would be interested in teaming up with Raritan Borough to help enforce parking laws. Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said he reached out to Somerville PD and he stated they are interested in a potential shared service for parking enforcement. Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin went on to say he will follow up with our Raritan Chief of Police, Ray Nolte. A brief discussion among the Governing Body and Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin ensued. It was mentioned that a fulltime person would need to be hired and would work part-time for both Raritan and Somerville. This topic will continue to be discussed further.

4. **Property Tax Reward Program (JI)**
Councilman Ifan handed over the topic to Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin who said he reached out to a company that supports/aids other local towns with their Property Tax Reward Programs. If the Council wants to move forward, the next step would be to meet with the company and see if it's a program we would like to pursue. The Governing Body unofficially agreed to move forward with the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Engineer's Report (SS)**
Raritan Borough Engineer Stan Schrek delivered the following report:

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. **Update:** Project is advancing through environmental review. Based on NJDOT schedule, this project will not be in construction in 2021.

NJDOT 2022 Municipal Aid Applications

This year's grant cycle is due on July 1. We suggest continuing our recent work in the Meehan area with the submission of two grant requests. Priority 1 grant will be Improvements to Colby Ave., Berwick Street and Arnold Ave. Priority 2 will be Brentwood Rd., Avon Ridge Rd. and Tysley Lane. **Update:** Awaiting award.

Orlando Drive/Somerset County Transfer

The county has requested extensive files/information/date 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:** Coordinated with Fire Chief, Police Chief and DPW Superintendent. Proceeding with design per program as earlier presented for the Police/Fire/OEM Building. Added Secretary Office with Public Vestibule to DPW Building. Awaiting right of entry authorization with County to permit driller on site for geotech analysis required for foundation design. Geotech report required at both sites. As of this date we are still awaiting right of entry. Survey work has been completed on the PD/FD/OEM site and preliminary design work as commenced.

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. **Update:** The project is scheduled to begin construction but has been delayed due to Covid outbreak with contractor.

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, based on repairs know on Bell Avenue. **Update:** bids have been rejected. Project will be rebid once County funding agreement for 2021 CDBG has been finalized.

2021 CDBG Applications

We are recommending that the Borough submit an application for sanitary sewer and storm sewer repairs and maintenance within the CDBG designated areas. **Update:** bids have been rejected. Project will be rebid once County funding agreement for 2021 CDBG has been finalized.

2021 NJDOT – Meehan and Helene

The Borough has been awarded both Priority 1 and Priority 2 grants for 2021 totaling \$750,000. We will be proceeding with survey and design subject to revisions to the capital ordinance adding \$100,000 for the anticipated Borough's share. **Update:** design completed and submitted to NJDOT for review. Holding for sewer inspection results.

LaGrange Street Redevelopment
Planning Board proceeding with RDP.

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 the Project Engineer to finalize construction drawings related to the pedestrian walkway from Second Avenue to NJ Transit. The owner has requested a bond reduction. We will make a recommendation for a percentage reduction once inspections are completed. **Update:** Draft Amended Lease Agreement under review which will enable the installation of the pedestrian link between the project and the NJ Transit parking westerly parking lot.

2. Raritan Library Work (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said that the Raritan Public Library has some structural damage - including the foundation and excess moisture issues and that they would like a project bid out. He went on to state that the Library would like the Borough to assist them with the bidding process by requesting the use our Purchasing Agent to collect the bids. Council President Carra asked if the Brough would be paying for this fee, to which Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin clarified that the Library would be covering the fees.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Patente, Council moved to Authorize the Use of Our PPA to the Raritan Library.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Ifan, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

3. EDC Christmas Market Funding (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the grant money from the County for the Christmas Market won't be available until after the event, so there is a concern about funding. He went on to say that he spoke to County and the Borough's auditors, confirming we can amend the Borough's budget to fund the Christmas Market's fee of \$20,000 upfront with a formal letter from County stating a reimbursement will be issued back to the Borough when the grant money becomes available. This topic is also on the Consent Agenda for today's meeting as Resolution No. 2021-09-155. Mayor Bray thanked Eric for his tremendous work on this big task.

4. Borough Hall Drop Box (EC)

Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin said that Borough Assistant Administrator/Assistant CFO Cook-Vitale has been reaching out to companies to get vinyl wraps on the Brough Hall Drop Boxes. She is still in the process of gathering renderings and quotes.

5. Christmas Decorations for Main Street (EC)
Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that Vince LoMedico, DPW Director, informed him that all the Christmas decorations for Main Street were destroyed in storm Ida. The Borough will supply the funds for new decorations but will also try to be reimbursed. Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin suggested that Economic Development Committee like to be included in picking out the decorations, which was unofficially agreed upon by the Governing Body.

6. Borough Hall Display Case (EC)
Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin proposed that the display case in Borough Hall be updated since it has been the same WWI/WWII display for a few years. He expressed that he would like to see some artwork from the local schools displayed there. Borough Administrator/Clerk Colvin reached out the Historic and Culture Committee and they are okay with sharing the display case in question, perhaps switching back and forth every several years. The Governing Body were all behind this new display idea.

7. Police Commissioner (PO)
Council addressed this issue in Executive Session. No additional conversation took place.

CONSENT AGENDA

(Resolution Nos. 2021-09-151 – 2021-09-159)

Resolution No. 2021-09-151	Authorizing Acceptance of NJ State SFY21 Body-Worn Camera Grant Program
Resolution No. 2021-09-152	Authorizing Hiring of Part-Time, Seasonal Help for Leaf Collection – a Department of Public Works
Resolution No. 2021-09-153	Rejecting All Bids – Bell Avenue Sewer & Road Repairs
Resolution No. 2021-09-154	Approving Chapter 159 – Alcohol Education Rehab Fund
Resolution No. 2021-09-155	Approving Chapter 159 – Raritan Christmas Market
Resolution No. 2021-09-156	Approving Chapter 159 – Clean Communities
Resolution No. 2021-09-157	Approving Chapter 159 – Discovering Raritan
Resolution No. 2021-09-158	Authorizing Entering into National Purchasing Partners
Resolution No. 2021-09-159	Authorizing Disposal of Surplus Police Equipment

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

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Ifan, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2021-09-160

Approving Bill List

On a motion by Councilman Ifan, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2021-09-160.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Ifan, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

PURCHASE ORDER REQUESTS

None

COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Orozco – Councilman Orozco said the Board of Education is currently in the middle of meetings and he will have more to report next Borough Council Meeting. Councilman Orozco went on to say he will provide Raritan Fire Department call stats the first meeting of every month, so he did not have any Fire related updates to report.

Councilman Ifan – Councilman Ifan reported that he missed the Environmental Commission meeting last Thursday but he knows they discussed the continued spotted lanternfly issue, stating that there is information regarding them on the Environmental Commission Facebook page. Councilman Ifan also conveyed that the topic of electric car charging stations will be looked into by the Environmental Commission along with the Planning Board’s involvement for locations. He also notated that the EC will be running an environmental cleanup and are looking for volunteers to help with that.

Councilman Patente – Councilman Patente said the Historic and Culture Committee is looking into expanding their marketing outreach – possibly moving onto Facebook. Councilman Patente reported that the EDC did not have a meeting, but they have been working on getting things ready for the Christmas Market. Councilman Patente also said that he did not get to attend the Partnership meeting this month, so he has nothing to report on that topic.

Council President Carra – Council President Carra reported that the Board of Health’s Office of Vital Statistics selected a new Deputy Registrar for the Borough of Raritan, Alyssa Cornella, the Borough’s current Administrative Assistant. Council President Carra then read off fee collection stats for the Office of Vital Statistics totaling in \$506.05. He then announced that the next BOH meeting will be Wednesday, October 13th at 7pm. Council President Carra reported the August stats for Municipal Court, which resulted in \$7,441.81 being allotted to the Borough. Council President Carra stated that he was not able to attend the Planning Board meeting, but the next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 27th at 6:30pm.

Councilwoman Melitsky – Councilwoman Melitsky reported that Recreation is currently having T-ball and cross-country running, which she has attended a few meets for, stating that the kids are really enjoying it. She also stated that the Trunk-or-Treat event is being held on Saturday, October 23rd at JFK School, with a rain date of Saturday, October 30th. Councilwoman Melitsky said that as for herself and the John Basilone Committee, they recently held a 5K which was well attended,

with the proceeds going to Steeplechase Cancer Center and Fisher House Foundation for Veterans. She also reported that the 40th Annual John Basilone Parade was held on September 19th and was a great time. She added that the streets were alive with many public attendees.

Councilman Patente – Councilman Patente said he wanted to add that at the next Council Meeting there will be a wonderful presentation about Pilot Programs, and he encouraged everyone to attend the prestation to see how they work.

Mayor Bray – The Mayor thanked and congratulated the Basilone Parade Committee for putting on such a well-attended, wonderful parade this year. He also added that since the parade was cancelled last year and there was some water damage done to the floats this year, that it was great to see the parade take place last week. Mayor Bray stated that this was the first parade that took place without John Pacifico and congratulated the committee on a great job.

Borough Engineer Schrek – Borough Engineer Schrek spoke, but was inaudible.

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.

Jim Foohey, 710 Rhine Boulevard: Mr. Foohey raised his concerns about Council not being able to find a high-school student to operate the camera during Council Meetings at the current rate of \$25 per meeting. Jim would like to see the going rate upped to \$50 a meeting, adding that the Borough has a yearly broadcast budget. The Governing Body were in agreeance with Mr. Foohey, with the Mayor saying he would get the word out to the Tech Department at Bridgewater-Raritan High School.

Mr. Foohey also expressed his opinion that Jack M. Ciattarelli should not have been in the John Basilone Parade, stating that that was too political, and he was shocked to see Jack in the parade. Jim stated that he used to be on council and out of respect for the Basilone family, no political signs are posted along the parade route until after the parade, adding that he even makes it a point to not wear anything political to the parade

Lisa Snyder, 26 2nd Ave – Lisa said the traffic on 2nd Ave. has increased since the new apartment building went up. Lisa voiced her concerns about cars flying by up to 50MPH and people driving straight through the stop sign, adding that if her daughter had stepped out of her car a moment sooner, the speeding driver would have killed her. Lisa would like to see a Police Officer stationed there, offering up her own driveway, to witness the recurring speeding issue. Borough Engineer Schrek asked if it might be possible to erect a speed monitor to monitor the speeding on 2nd Ave. and then have the police issue speeding tickets. There was a brief conversation between member of the Governing Body, who unofficially agreed that the speed monitor would be a good idea.

Bill Unclear Last Name and Address – Bill stated he also agrees that 2nd Ave. should remain a one-way street, adding that he was under the impression that it would be remaining a one-way

indefinitely when Block 81 was being redeveloped. Bill expressed his opinion that council consider making 2nd Ave. have a 15MPH speed limit on the stretch by the school for the safety of the children if it goes back to a two-way-street. Borough Engineer Schrek asked to hold off on this topic until the speech that will be delivered later in tonight's meeting.

Joe Kempe, 114 Sherman Ave. – Joe said that in regard to the white Police Cruisers being spotted on 2nd Ave., he thinks it would be great to see the Raritan Police Department utilize more of their equipment and have policemen set up on 2nd Ave. with their Police Bicycles to catch speeders. He suggested to also have a Police Cruiser at the end of the street to do the complete pull-over of the motorist.

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

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Ifan, Council moved to Renter Executive Session.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Ifan, Melitsky, Orozco, Patente

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

REGULAR MEETING ADJOURNMENT

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

Recorded Vote:

All in Favor

Motion Passed: 4-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Alyssa Cornella
Administrative Assistant
Office of the Borough Clerk

Approved: _____
Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: _____