

MINUTES

BOROUGH OF RARITAN REGULAR MEETING

**MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2023
6:30 P.M. – EXECUTIVE SESSION
7 P.M. – REGULAR SESSION**

This Regular Meeting of the Governing Body was called to order by Mayor Bray in the Meeting Room of the Raritan Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869 at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 20, 2023.

Mayor Bray announced the Regular Meeting was called to order by pursuant to applicable portions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate Notice of this Regular Meeting was posted in Borough Hall, on the Borough website and communicated to *The Courier News*, *The Star Ledger* and *The Breeze* on March 8, 2023.

ROLL CALL

Present: Council President Carra, Councilman Armahizer, Councilman Fritzinger, Councilwoman Hutzler, Councilman Orozco
Also Present: Administrator/Borough Clerk Colvin, Assistant Administrator/Chief Financial Officer Cooke-Vitale, Borough Engineer Schreck, Borough Attorney Robertson
Absent: Councilwoman Melitsky

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Bray

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2023-03-048

Entering Executive Session

Potential Litigation

Notice of Violation – Board of Health

Personnel

Administration, Police

Contract Negotiations

Hidden Pond, Potential Real Property Purchase

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-03-048.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Orozco, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

Council convened in Executive Session at 6:31 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Reconvene in Regular Session.

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

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 speak.

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

MINUTES

1. Reorganization 2023

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to Approve the Reorganization Minutes of January 3, 2023.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Orozco, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

2. March 7, 2023

On a motion by Councilman Fritzingler, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Approve the Minutes of March 7, 2023.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Orozco, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

3. March 14, 2023

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Council President Orozco, Council moved to Approve the Minutes of March 14, 2023.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: Orozco

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

OLD BUSINESS

1. Recreation Strategic Plan

Council President Carra said the Recreation Committee met Thursday, March 16, 2023 to survey the facilities at Basilone Park, with a walk-by of the pool, and the soil erosion located near the creek. A walk through of other park facilities is anticipated for continued discussion in conjunction with the 2023/2024 Master Plan and Budget.

2. Property Investigation

Council President Carra provided an update on the walk through that he was accompanied by Administrator/Borough Clerk Colvin, Assistant Administrator/CFO Cook/Vitale, Borough Engineer Schrek, Borough Tax Assessor Dirado of the PNC Bank located on Main Street as a proposed new Borough Hall. Council President Carra said the building was in good condition with a few minor repairs expected. Council has met with the Bond Council and Financial Advisor. Council President Carra asked for permission to take the next steps to solicit appraisals for expected costs on the project.

On a motion by Councilman Fritzinger, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Solicit Appraisals for the PNC Bank.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

NEW BUSINESS

1. Engineer's Report:

NJTPA/NJDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Borough Engineer Schreck reported on the continued work of the Preliminary Design Drawings for the Thompson/Anderson pedestrian routes from NJ Transit Station to the Riverfront. Project coordination between NV5, VCEA and NJDOT will continue throughout this process. The Preliminary Design Submission has been reviewed and dated October 2021 and various cost saving measures have been outlined to bring the project within budget. The NJDOT advised that the project remains in environmental review. Once the review is complete, final design documents will be prepared by the Consulting Engineer. Construction on the project is expected in 2023.

Public Safety Building/DPW Building

The Police Department's Public Safety Building concept has been reviewed by the Mayor and Council. The building plans have been submitted for permit.

2023 CDBG Applications

Application for sanitary sewer, storm sewer repairs and maintenance have been made within the CDBG designated areas.

2021 NJDOT – Meehan and Helene / 2022 NJDOT – Arnold, Berwick and Colby

The design for Meehan and Helene is complete. The project for Arnold, Berwick and Colby is under construction. All drainage, curbing, ADA compliant sidewalk work and apron work is completed. The project is stabilized and shut down for the winter months. Final paving work will proceed once asphalt plants reopen in Spring.

2023 NJDOT – Drainage Improvements

NJDOT Local Aid applications are due on July 1, 2023. An application for drainage improvements is suggested to the Richard Street section of the Borough which will address those complaints. The Borough was awarded a NJDOT Local Aid Grant in the amount of \$347,580.00, Field work has commenced on the project with a gathering of mapping data via GIS assets.

Raritan Crossing Redevelopment

Continuation of a Public Hearing is scheduled for March 22, 2023.

Raritan Mall Redevelopment

The Planning Board has recommended the preparation of a Redevelopment Plan, and work has commenced in conjunction with the Redevelopment Attorney. The property owner has applied for NJDEP Flood Hazard Determination.

MS4 Compliance

NJDEP has promulgated new rules affecting the MS4 Permit, requiring additional GIS map work, inspection and monitoring of the stormwater conveyance assets as well as adoption of new ordinances, revisions to existing ordinances, public education and outreach components. Further reporting will become available as the timeline and cost are better understood. A \$25,000.00 will be issued in support.

Frelinghuysen and Basilone Pools

Research on available construction documents was completed but produced limited information. Detailed work is required to enable the two projects, which are the repairs and improvements to the Frelinghuysen Pool and the abandonment of the Basilone Pool with installation of a new Splash Park. Preparation of supporting documentation is required for the Somerset County Grant Program.

Councilman Orozco asked how much the match would be for the installation of the new Splash Park. Administrator/Borough Clerk Colvin answered it would be approximately \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00.

Splash Park

Council President Carra reported the Somerset County Open Space Advisory Committee obtained a grant and has been reviewed by Borough Engineer Schreck for the permit.

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 speak regarding the CDBG Grant Application.

Joe DiVito, 710 Columbus Avenue, spoke, but not about the CDBG grant application. Mr. DiVito asked Borough Engineer Schreck to elaborate on the design work that was discussed in an article published in the Breeze regarding impervious areas at Riverside and Columbus. Borough Engineer Schreck said that the Borough has a maximum impervious coverage limit, and explained that anything on a homeowner's property that does not allow water to penetrate, such as driveways, patios, swimming pools and homes themselves can be limited within that development. Investigation has shown that the area has an increase in impervious coverage than what is allowable causing flooding, along recent intense and frequent storms. The piping system is designed for a twenty-five-year storm. These events have become more frequent and need to be addressed. The project will increase pipe sizing and the number of inlets to relieve flooding.

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

ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION

Ordinance No. 2023-03

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Adopting a Redevelopment Plan for an Area in Need of Redevelopment Consisting of Block 93, Lots 1 & 2 (Commonly known as 57 & 59 LaGrange Street)

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-03

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

ORDINANCE – SECOND READING & PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance No. 2023-01

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Amending and Supplementing the Code of the Borough of Raritan, Chapter 315, to Update the Borough Stormwater Management Plan

Mayor Bray opened Public Hearing for any member(s) of the Public wishing to speak concerning Ordinance No.2023-01.

Borough Engineer Schreck updated the Council on the storm water ordinance. The ordinance was updated two years ago due to changes in guidelines provided by the DEP. Upon effect of that ordinance, it eliminated ordinances that were previously codified such as picking up after your dog or trash. This amendment places them back in effect and allows for the new guidelines promulgated by the State of New Jersey for stormwater management.

Neither seeing nor hearing any member(s) of the public, the Mayor closed the Public Hearing.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Adopt Ordinance No. 2023-01.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

(Resolution No. 2023-03-049 – Resolution No. 2023-03-051)

Resolution No. 2023-03-049

Confirming Commitment to Splash Park & Applying for Grant through Somerset County Open Space with Match

Resolution No. 2023-03-050

Authorizing the Refund of Railroad Monthly Parking Supporting 2023 CDBG Grant Application – Raritan Borough – Sanitary Sewer Improvements

Resolution No. 2023-03-051

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to adopt the **CONSENT AGENDA**.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2023-03-052

Approving Bill List

On a motion by Councilman Fritzingler, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-03-052 Bill List.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

CERTIFICATION OF FUNDS

1. Van Cleef Engineering – Architectural Plans & Building Permit Preparation – \$10,035.41

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Approve the Certification of Funds.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Armahizer:

The Environmental Commission met on March 16, 2023. The items discussed were continued public outreach through social media, purchase of rain barrel kits from Home Depot. Councilman Armahizer said he reached out to the City of Salem to acquire 600-year-old tree seedings and is awaiting a response. The next meeting for the Environmental Commission will be held at Borough Hall on April 12, 2023. The Board of Health will meet at Borough Hall also on April 12, 2023

Councilman Orozco

Nothing to report.

Councilman Fritzinger

Councilman Fritzinger gave the Building Department activity report for February 23, 2023, through March 3, 2023, and made mention to in addition of residential permitting, there are many permits being reviewed in the industrial quarter. The Building Department is very busy, creating good things for the Borough. Public Works has had a mild winter. The street sweeper is out and functioning. Councilman Fritzinger thanked the Director of Public Works Vince LoMedico and the employees at Public Works for their efforts in rehabilitating the street sweeper. The Historical and Cultural Committee met Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at the Raritan Library. The Committee reviewed their budget, future purchases, fundraising and announced the commencement of a new Facebook page. Councilman Fritzinger and urged everyone to visit the page. The Committee acquired a sign that will be placed at the Raritan Library. The sign is currently in the possession of Public Works to be erected in the Spring. The Knox Porter plaque is being worked on with ideas of different banners under discussion. More information to follow. Mayor Bray said the Recreation and Historical and Cultural Committee held an event in honor of the Anniversary of the Knox Porter Resolution. The Committee explored requesting the original document be borrowed for display at Borough Hall or the Library. Unfortunately, the arrangement was unable to be executed.

The Committee is exploring to commission the creation of a replica for the Borough. The next meeting for the Historical and Cultural Committee will be at 6:30 p.m. on April 16, 2023, located at the Raritan Library.

Council President Carra

The Planning Board meets Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. to continue discussion on Raritan Crossing Hearing, and resolutions for Char Steakhouse and Valley Wellness. The Finance Committee met Thursday, March 16, 2023, to finalize the budget ready for introduction at the next Council meeting. Council President Carra thanked Administrator/Borough Clerk Colvin and Assistant Administrator/CFO Cook/Vitale for their efforts. The Regional Center Partnership met Wednesday, March 15, 2023. Council President Carra and Borough Engineer Schreck will participate on the working committee for Raritan Greenway and Raritan River and looks forward to working with them. The Regional Center Partnership will meet again in May.

Councilwoman Hutzler

The Annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for Saturday, April 1, 2023, at Frelinghuysen Park. The Rain Date for the event will be Saturday, April 8, 2023. Robotics classes will be available for ages 8 through 12 on Tuesdays April 18 and run through May 23, 2023, located in the Community Room at Borough Hall. CPR classes have been postponed and will be rescheduled for a later date. For information on classes and scheduled visit Raritan Recreation on Facebook and Raritan Borough's website. Councilwoman Hutzler reported she received an email from the Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee requesting permission to hold a Farmers Market one Sunday per month to begin in June through October. The Farmers Market would be held in the parking lot of the Washington School.

Mayor Bray said the Farmers Market could be held and asked Councilwoman Hutzler to gather more information regarding the parking, and to also contact the Police Department and other relevant departments that would need to be included.

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)

Bill Pennington, 1st Avenue, commented on speed limits reduced to 25 miles per hour in Somerville. He asked if the Council would consider reducing them, and in certain areas such as Old York Road, near the statue and Orlando Drive, and change Raritan to "Drive 25", and provide a crosswalk at the location of Bussey Lane and Orlando Drive leading to the trail. Mr. Pennington also asked that No Parking Areas to be visibly marked to prevent new residents who are unfamiliar with the area from parking in those spots.

Mayor Bray stated that he contacted the County after an incident that occurred at that location last Summer and was denied his request. Administrator/Borough Clerk Colvin said he is aware of the issue with parking and the Department of Public Works has been notified.

Councilman Orozco agreed with Mr. Pennington sentiments and said Borough Engineer Schreck has been tasked with surveying the areas to correct the issue.

Joyce (inaudible) Vanderveer Road, asked why the Borough is looking into purchasing the PNC Bank on Main Street. Ms. Moore asked if Council Meeting Minutes are available and where they can be located.

Mayor Bray answered that there were discussions to purchase the Washington School for use by the Police and Fire Department. Due to the Covid-19 Crisis costs for materials have risen dramatically. The Borough decided to continue looking at alternative options to minimize costs.

Administrator/Borough Clerk Colvin answered Council Meeting Minutes are posted on the Borough's website on the main page Meetings Calendar and are also available from the Borough Clerk's Office upon request.

Joe DiVito, 710 Columbus Avenue, thanked Borough Engineer Schreck for obtaining the funds for the CDBG Grant. Mr. DiVito asked if discussions will continue at the next meeting, and stated he believes the DiCicco Development was the only change made to the area. Mr. DiVito asked when the Council Meeting would be held.

Mayor Bray confirmed discussion will continue, and Council will meet Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

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

RECONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Reconvene in Executive Session for further discussion. Mayor Bray stated action may be taken on the items discussed.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Fritzinger, Council moved to Reconvene in Executive Session.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Melitsky

Motion Carried: 5-0

RECONVENE EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Reconvene into Executive Session to discuss a Health Department issue.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Fritzinger, Council Reconvened in Executive Session.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Armahizer

Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: Melitsky
Motion Carried: 5-0

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to Reconvene in Regular Session.

Council exited Executive Session, and resumed Regular Session at 8:08 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, the Council moved to Adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Recorded Vote:

All in favor
Motion Passed: 5-0
Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Patricia Gravatt
Deputy Clerk/HR Coordinator

Approved: _____
Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: _____