

MINUTES

BOROUGH OF RARITAN REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2023
6:30 P.M. – EXECUTIVE SESSION
7 P.M. – REGULAR SESSION

This Regular Meeting of the Governing Body was called to order by Council President Carra in the Meeting Room of the Raritan Municipal Building, 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869 at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 18th, 2023.

Council President Carra 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 January 5, 2023.

ROLL CALL

Present: Council President Carra, Councilman Armahizer, Councilman Fritzingler, Councilwoman Hutzler, Councilwoman Melitsky (via telephone), Councilman Orozco

Also Present: Administrator/Clerk Colvin, Assistant Administrator/CFO Cook-Vitale, Borough Attorney William Robertson, Borough Engineer Stanley Schrek

Absent: Mayor Bray

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilwoman Melitsky

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2023-07-117

Entering Executive Session

1. Personnel
Construction, Administration, Police
2. Contract Negotiations
Hidden Pond, 9 West
Somerset Street, Shared Services,
Tillman Street
3. Attorney Client
Orlando Drive

On a motion by Councilman Fritzingler seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-07-117

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x
Motion Carried: 6-0

The Council convened in Executive Session at 6:33 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNMENT

Council moved to Reconvene in Regular Session unanimously.

Council exited Executive Session, and resumed Regular Session at 7:06 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)

Council President Carra opened the Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public to wishing to speak.

Mr. Ferozan, 25 Anderson Street – Stated that on November 5, 2022, in regards to his other property, 32 Thompson St., the owner in lot number 17, which is adjacent to the backyard of his property, started to construct a parking lot. They laid the foundation of the wall of the parking lot on his property. They created a five to six feet surface set back between the two properties and they also blocked the runoff for the storm water from his house, which posed a flood risk to his property. He stated that the parking lot was not constructed following the code of New Jersey for the construction of parking lots. He is concerned that the parking lot collects a lot of heat energy which gets absorbed by the neighboring houses around the parking lot.

Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated it was the first time he has heard about this, collected his contact information, and stated one of the professionals will reach out to him.

Neither seeing nor hearing any additional member of the Public, Council President Carra closed Public Comment.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Buildings – Council President Carra said he had an update on the PNC Bank on Somerset Street. He said they did receive the notes on July 13th, he said under the consent agenda is the execution of the purchase documents for the property and they anticipate on closing July 21st. He said the new plan will save more than \$4 million dollars in taxpayer funds, rather than the old plan they were considering, which could have been more than twice the price.

2. Engineer's Report (SS):

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. We have reviewed the Preliminary Design Submission as dated October 2021 and have suggested various cost savings measures to bring the project within the grant budget. The consultant will be making a presentation in November/December meeting depending on Council's schedule. NJDOT has advised that the project remains in environmental review. Per NJDOT:

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Our local aid unit is working on this, and they anticipate completion of the CED by mid-May 2023. Cultural Resources that are on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places are located within the project study area. Coordination with the NJDEP's - Historic Preservation Office has been initiated. We will continue to work with the Borough and the HPO to ensure the proposed design/aesthetic will not result in an Adverse Effect to the Cultural Resources and the process is completed expeditiously.

Once the environmental review is completed, Final design documents must be prepared by the consulting engineering firm. We're pushing for construction in 2023.

Update: As of June 29, the Borough is now permitted to move to the next stages, which will include a final FD proposal which should be prepared by NV5. Our office is coordinating with NV5 to make sure there will be an actionable item at the August meeting.

2023 CDBG Applications

We have submitted an application for sanitary sewer and storm sewer repairs and maintenance within the CDBG designated areas. The CBDG area has been reduced under new census data.

Update: Received a grant for a sewer study in the above-referenced area, field work is being planned.

2021 NJDOT – Meehan and Helene

Project has been fully constructed. Coordination with the NJDOT is underway. We would like final approval on items from NJDOT prior to issuing our own punch list to avoid discrepancies. Upon receipt of comments from the NJDOT, our office will finalize a punch list and close out of construction administration.

3. Pedestrian Safety- Councilman Orozco stated one of the residents brought up how the speed limit should be lowered, especially relating to an older incident. He asked if all the Borough roads could lower the speed limit to 25 MPH.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco seconded by Councilman Armahizer.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Councilman Orozco asked if they could add a crosswalk to cross Somerset ST.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco seconded by Councilman Armahizer.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

4. Bakery Car show – Council President Carra said they’re doing a few car shows, one is on August 20th from 8 to 10:30 and one is going to be September 17th during the same time period. He asked if the council would allow them to block a couple of spots right in front of the bakery with cones in the morning.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council agreed to the road closure:

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

5. Recreation Strategic Plan – Council President Carra said he and Councilwoman Hutzler met with Andy and Tori from recreation before their committee meeting the week prior. He said they collected all their observations from their several walks at the parks, they put suggestions and repairs in one master list and their going to correlate when they want to exactly do everything. He said they’re hoping they have it ready for the August meeting. Council President Carra asks for a motion for the Basketball courts and for their engineering department to prepare design work for that.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to authorize the engineering firm to address the Basketball courts:

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Council President Carra also asked for a motion for the splash park to proceed with conceptual design, preparation, and cost estimates to submit to the county.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilman Fritzingler, Council authorized the engineering firm to prepare above:

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

6. Street Signs- Councilman Armahizer said he recently discussed with Administrator/Clerk Colvin about replacing all the current street signs and poles in town. He wants to hear the Councils' thoughts on color selection or if it's something they are interested in pursuing.

Councilman Orozco asked the Borough engineer about the NJTAP and how he thought they covered street signs.

Stanley Schrek said he was going to investigate that and get back to them with further information on that.

Councilman Armahizer asked to make a motion on coming up with a proposal or a quote for getting new street signs and poles.

On a motion by Councilman Armahizer, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

7. Bridge Lighting- Councilman Orozco said he started to do research with Administrator/Clerk Colvin on getting low-cost lighting for the bridge at nighttime. He asked for a motion to talk further with the county to investigate getting lighting for the bridge.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council authorized the continued investigation:

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

8. Notifying Governing Body of Sale of Notes – Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the notes sold for the sale of the building and from a 2020 debt that they had. He said they received a 4.25% interest rate from Amboy Bank. He also said if anyone wanted anymore detail on it to reach out to him directly.

9. Park & Public Facilities Use Request Application – Councilman Orozco said someone was looking into holding a wedding at the bridge and they noticed they don't have any application process for any of the parks. He asked if they could have a "public facilities use request form".

Administrator/Clerk Colvin said they could possibly have that as an introduction of an ordinance for the next meeting.

10. Habitat for Humanity – Council President Carra said Eric and him met with Melissa Flynn and Susan Harkins from the Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity. They wanted to share they have the Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity Home Repairs Program, any Raritan Residents who are at 80% or below the area median income would qualify. Some options they have are “A brush with kindness” which includes a smaller scale clearing of basements, yard cleanup, deck maintenance, small paint or repair jobs. They have slightly larger projects which include installing sheet rock, flooring cabinets, or window paints. They also do critical home repairs for health and safety, which include repairing ramps, railings, entry doors, furnaces, roof replacements, siding repairs, and accessibility upgrades. Homeowners would be responsible to pay a percentage of the project cost determined by a sliding scale based on income. For larger projects payments can be made overtime with zero interest. For a household of one, the maximum income would be \$80,024. A household of two would be \$91,456. A household of four is \$114,320. The same flyer is on the borough website. Habitat for Humanity also wanted to investigate properties for future potential lower income housing units.

11. Brentwood Block Party- Administrator /Clerk Colvin said this is turning to an annual block party on Brentwood Road, they close it at Colby and Tysley The date is September 30th with an October 7th Rain date because if it’s the road closure they would need council approval.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco. seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council authorized the block party and related road closures:

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

12. Pickleball- Council President Carra said last meeting Mayor Bray asked if they could get a temporary pickleball court while they work out the one, they want to budget for. He said the Basilone Park Basketball Court would turn their other two nets into a pickleball court, they did get a quote for patching, resurfacing, striping painting, and a portable net in the amount of \$1,557.19 which includes delivery. He asked for a motion for approval.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco. seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler. Council authorized the patching and striping of the court.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

13. Daily Train Station Additional Spaces- Administrator/Clerk Colvin said several months ago they were going to create additional parking spaces for daily parking commuters at the train station. He said there was delays with software issues, but there is going to be 27 new spaces for daily parking, they're hoping to have everything done within the next month.

14. Walk to Fight Alzheimer's Banner Request- Administrator/Clerk Colvin said this is an annual event that is going to be October 7th at Duke Island Park. He said the group would like to hang a banner across main street in September to promote the event. He asked for a motion to approve putting the banner up.

On a motion by Councilman Fritzingler seconded by Councilman Orozco, authorized the hanging of the banner by the Department of Public Works.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

ORDINANCE – SECOND READINGS & PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance No. 2023-13

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Amending Chapter 195, "Lead Paint Testing" of the Code of the Borough of Raritan

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilman Fritzingler, the Council moved to open to Public Comment for members of the public wishing to speak on this ordinance.

Recorded Vote

All in favor

Motion Passed: 6-0

Council President Carra opened the Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public to wishing to speak.

Mrs. Frichie 445 Vanderver Road- Mrs. Frichie asked the requirements of the state and how they want to do the Lead paint testing.

Attorney William Robertson said Lou Garra is going to put up the procedures on the website so that everybody will understand what's required. It's going to be required starting July 24th, 2024.

Neither seeing nor hearing any additional members of the Public, Council President Carra closed Public Comment.

Council President Carra asked for a motion to Adopt Ordinance No. 2023-13.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Adopt Ordinance No. 2023-13.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION

Ordinance No. 2023-14

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Repealing Chapter 45, Personnel Policies, of the Borough Code in its Entirety and Replacing with Personnel Policies

Council President Carra asked for a motion to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-14

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-14.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Ordinance No. 2023-15

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Authorizing a Special Emergency Appropriation Pursuant to N.J.S.A 40A:4-53 to Fund a Revelation of Real Property

Council President Carra asked for a motion to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-15

On a motion by Councilman Fritzinger, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-15.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

CONSENT AGENDA

(Resolution Nos. 2023-07-118 – 2023-07-127)

Resolution No. 2023-07-118	Refunding Tax Overpayment – Block 65 Lot 25
Resolution No. 2023-07-119	Supporting NJDOT Route 202/First Avenue Preferred Alternative – Jughandle Improvements
Resolution No. 2023-07-120	Approving Fees for Lead-Based Paint Inspections
Resolution No. 2023-07-121	Refunding Unused Monthly Parking Pass – Zhao
Resolution No. 2023-07-122	Refunding Unused Daily Parking Pass – Shah
Resolution No. 2023-07-123	Authorizing Execution of Purchase Documents – 9 West Somerset Street
Resolution No. 2023-07-124	Authorizing Hiring – Part-Time HR Coordinator
Resolution No. 2023-07-125	Authorizing Hiring – Part-Time Administrative Assistant
Resolution No. 2023-07-126	Supporting and Authorizing Submission of NJDOT Grant
Resolution No. 2023-07-127	Authorizing Lien Redemption

Councilman Orozco asked for clarification on Resolution No. 2023-07-124

A brief discussion ensued with various Council members expressing their opinions on a part-time HR Coordinator.

Council President Carra asked for a motion to Approve Resolution No. 2023-07-124

On a motion made by Councilman Fritzinger, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky and carried unanimously.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Armahizer, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: x
Motion Carried: 6-0

Council President Carra asked for a motion to Approve the remaining Resolutions under the Consent Agenda

Councilman Orozco moved to adopt the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilman Armahizer and carried unanimously.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzinger, Armahizer, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: x
Motion Carried: 6-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2023-07-128

Approving Bill List

Council President Carra asked for a motion to Approve Resolution No. 2023-07-128- Approving Bill List.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-07-128- Approving Bill List.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

CERTIFICATION OF FUNDS

1. Van Cleef Engineering – Various Engineering Expenses – \$11,622.75
2. New Public Building – Closing Costs – \$1,415,367.51
3. Bala Partners – Lien Redemption Premium – \$45,000.00
4. Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority – Monthly Estimated Payment - \$102,021.89
5. Bridgewater Resources – Dumping Fees – \$21,906.46

Council President Carra asked for a motion for the certification of funds 1.2.3 and 5.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Fritzinger, Council moved to Approve Certification of Funds 1,2,3 and 5.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Council President Carra asked for a motion for certification of funds for the Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Approve the Certification of Funds for the Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Armahizer, Fritzinger, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: Carra

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 5-0-1

COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Orozco – He spoke with Mike Pepe earlier that day. He said Mike is trying to get some support for moving the date of the meetings, and he’s trying to work on bringing them to JFK so it’s more convenient. For the Basilone Committee their next meeting is July 19th 7:00pm at the library. The registration for the parade has already started, and if you have a group that wanted to participate in the parade you can apply on their website.

Councilman Fritzinger – For the building department, construction permit activity for the period 6/21/23-7/17/23; there were ten building permits, ten plumbing permits, thirteen electrical, five fire, and two mechanicals, totaling forty with fees collected to the borough of \$5,352.00. For public works, they emptied pots and put plant pots at Somerset Street, they hung the banner for waterfront music night, cleaned up the retention basin at Cardinal woods, picked up and hung signs at speed bumps on Whitmire, also they started to work on straightening up the street signs. They also raked out the fields on Sherman Avenue, they did Kennedy school park pool cleanup, as well as pool repairs. They weed whacked all properties around town, power washed Freeland Heising pool, and filled and tested water at Freeland Heising pool. Bulk pickup will be the second Thursday in August. The Historical and Cultural Committee will be meeting July 19th 6:00pm at the Raritan Library.

Council President Carra – Regional Center partnership for July 19th is cancelled, their next meeting will be September 20th 5:00pm on Zoom. There was one application for the Municipal land use board for 3 wall street, it was approved for variances, regarding adding an addition to the home. Colfax and Freeland Heising will not be heard this month, but possibly in August. There are two applications scheduled to be heard next meeting, one is for 45 East Somerset Street, they’re looking to add a media room over at their garage, and for Valley Wellness, they’re coming back to the board to amend their site plan approval, one of their conditions were regarding parking. For affordable housing, the requirements are 375 units, currently they have 239 units, and there have been some funds used between 2010 and 2016 in the rehabilitation grant, but there hasn’t been any recently that their aware of. If anyone in town has any further questions, they can read the full report from Mr. Kyle through Administer/Clerk Colvin. Also on July 6th the fire department got their new firetruck.

Councilwoman Melitsky – Office of Emergency Management responded to the water main break that occurred on July 1st. Raritan was placed on the state of emergency, approximately a thousand people in the surrounding areas were without water for 48 hours. Raritan Borough emergency operation was activated and monitored remotely for the duration of the event. A water distribution location was at Borough Hall in the parking lot. During that time, 2,436 bottles of water were distributed and water was restored during the weekend. The police department participated during the “Put it Down” cell phone campaign on June 22nd and the fire department held the emergency vehicles send off for fourth grade students at John F Kennedy. On June 20th Alyssa Mrynyj was hired as a police officer, she will be attending the Morris County Police Academy. National Night Out will be August 1st from 4 to 8 p.m. at Frelinghuysen Park. For property maintenance from 5/15/23-07/14/23, seventy-seven inspections were done, fifty-four violations were issued, a total of \$4,001 was collected from thirteen violations.

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Councilwoman Hutzler – July 25th, they will be having Christmas in July at Frelinghuysen Park from 1 to 3 p.m. August 1st is National Night Out and the recreation committee will have a cotton candy stand. For Summer camps there are still a few openings for the first two weeks of August, if interested please contact the recreation director, Andrew Sabilia. For municipal court for the month of June total cases filed were 236, total cases disposed were 265, and total amount collected \$26,361.67. Total amount to the Borough of Raritan was \$11,087.29. For the economic development committee, they're hosting Waterfront Music Nights on July 29th from 6 to 9 p.m. on the green space along the river.

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)

Council President Carra opened the Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public to wishing to speak.

Neither seeing nor hearing any additional member of the Public, Council President Carra closed Public Comment.

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: 6-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Allorah Zigray
Administrative Assistant to the Borough Clerk

Approved: _____
Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: _____