

## MINUTES

### BOROUGH OF RARITAN REGULAR MEETING

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 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. Tuesday, September 5, 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 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, Borough Attorney William Robertson, Borough Engineer Stanley Schrek

#### INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Council President Carra

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2023-09-148

Entering Executive Session

1. Personnel  
Police, Administration, Public Works
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. 2023-09-148

#### Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

The Council convened in Executive Session at 6:30 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNMENT**

Council moved to Reconvene in Regular Session unanimously.

Council exited Executive Session, and resumed Regular Session at 7:03 p.m.

**PRESENTATION**

First Avenue/Burns Street Redevelopment Proposal

Mayor and Council listened to a presentation regarding a redevelopment proposal for First Avenue and Burns Street. No decisions were made.

**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 the Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public to wishing to speak.

Mike Pepe, Board of Education liaison to Council: Mr. Pepe wanted to remind everyone that school starts September 6<sup>th</sup>.

Jim Warner, 407 Victoria Street: Mr. Warner thanked Council for supporting the senior citizens.

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

**MINUTES**

1. Regular Meeting – May 16, 2023
2. Regular Meeting – June 20, 2023
3. Regular Meeting – July 18, 2023
4. Regular Meeting – August 15, 2023

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to table the minutes.

**Recorded Vote**

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1. 9 West Somerset Street (NC)**

Council President Carra said Administrator/Clerk Colvin sent the Council a preliminary architectural design of the new Borough Hall. The Council President said it is not the final plan and asked Council to review and report back to him with any feedback. Administrator/Clerk Colvin said he brought Borough employees to the building and

included their feedback in the design, which the architects adjusted accordingly. The Council President said he intends to have an ordinance to introduce at the next meeting regarding parking at 9 West Somerset Street.

**2. Street Signs (AA)**

Councilman Armahizer said the total cost of the street signs around the Borough is going to be around \$31,000. It would take around 9-12 months. Mayor Bray asked for next meeting to have a design plan and a quote from a private company for installation of the signs.

**3. Habitat for Humanity (NC)**

Council President Carra said he and Administrator/Clerk Colvin met with Habitat for Humanity recently. The organization, he said, is able to do affordable housing units for single homes or duplexes and are looking for property in town. Habitat, the Council President said, is also going to do some projects with Recreation to help the parks, such as repainting the dugouts, installing big benches, and pulling weeds in the jungle gym.

**4. School Lunch Balance Payments (AA)**

Councilman Armahizer said he would like the Borough to consider paying off the school lunch balance debt owed by students at JFK elementary school. In total, more than 120 Raritan families owe a total of \$5,852.36 for school lunches from the previous year going into this new school year, he said.

Mayor Bray expressed concern that people will use the Borough paying for school lunches to their advantage and not pay it the following school year.

Attorney William Robertson and Administrator/Clerk Colvin said they will investigate in further detail.

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to investigate the legality of paying the school lunch balances.

On a motion by Councilman Armahizer, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to approve the further investigation into the legality of paying the school lunch balances.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

**5. First Avenue/Route 202 Jughandle (NC)**

Council President Carra said DOT provided plans for the public information center last Thursday, and September 6 will be the last day to provide any feedback. You can get the email for Meredith Hammond on the Borough website. It's going to be final design, so any feedbacks or tweaks are appreciated, the Council President said.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Pedestrian Flags (NC)**

Council President Carra said the Recreation Director reached out to Ride Wise at the County and they were able to get 60 flags to help residents more safely cross at the crosswalks on Main Street. He said the flags will be on poles by the crosswalks, so pedestrians can easily obtain them.

**2. Valpeck Avenue (NC)**

Council President Carra said he had a resident from Valpeck Avenue reach out with issues regarding how parking may be making it difficult for garbage trucks and emergency vehicles to turn. He said Administrator/Clerk Colvin reached out to the Fire Department and Public Works – and neither department has concerns about the area.

**3. New Fire Department Members (JM)**

Councilwoman Melitsky said she would like to announce the appointment of three new firefighters: Seamus O'Donnell, Cliff Bogucheski and Sivamsh Indukuri

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to appoint the three new firefighters.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to approve the appointing of the three firefighters.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

**4. St. Joseph's Parking Request (EC)**

Administrators/Clerk Colvin said the Borough received a request from St. Joseph's to use the parking lot of the PNC Bank as an overflow parking lot for their event they have coming up on the 17<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 7 p.m. They are expecting 600 people in the area.

All Council members agreed there should be a further discussion with Administrator/Clerk Colvin to investigate the proper insurance and attorney review of opening the parking lot.

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to investigate the proper insurance and attorney review of opening the Parking lot for St. Joseph's.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to approve the further investigation and attorney review for opening the Parking lot for St. Joseph's.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

**5. Business Partnership Renewal (EC)**

Administrator/Clerk Colvin said this is an annual renewal for the Borough with the Somerset County Business Partnership. He asked if anyone was opposed to renewing that membership. Administrator/Clerk Colvin said he would send the renewal in since no one opposed.

**6. Dog Park Lease Renewal (EC)**

Administrator/Clerk Colvin said the Borough received notification from the County that the lease is up. The Borough leases the dog park from the County, it is County property, and a five-year lease is up. He asked whether the Borough would like to renew the lease for another five years – expiring July 31, 2028. A Resolution is listed on the Consent Agenda, he said.

**7. Online Animal Licensing (EC)**

Administrator/Clerk Colvin said they have been working with a third-party company to get some online payments happening. The Borough is working on train parking and pet licensing online. By the time the main renewal starts, at the beginning of the year, they should be up and running.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*(Resolution Nos. 2023-09-149 – 2023-09-151)*

Resolution No. 2023-09-149

Approving Lease Extension – Raritan Dog Park

Resolution No. 2023-09-150

Authorizing Renewal of Participation in Statewide Insurance Fund

Resolution No. 2023-09-151

Authorizing Tax Overpayment Refund – B100 L24

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve the Consent Agenda – Resolution No. 2023-09-149 through Resolution No. 2023-09-151.

On a motion by Councilman Fritzingler, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to approve the Consent Agenda.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Authorize the Administrator to Sign Borough consent for 401 Tillmon Street.

On a motion by Councilwoman Hutzler, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Provide the Authorization listed above.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x



September 5, 2023

Regular Meeting

been drained, workers cut down the poles and nets to make way for the pickle ball court, repaired and painted the cracks at the pickleball court, cut down the Tillman streetlight, brought rain barrels over to Washington school, weed whacked and mulched. Workers also repainted the sign at the Washington School Monument and took scrap metal over for payment. Bulk pickup will be September 14<sup>th</sup>. From the Building Department, from August 16<sup>th</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>, six building permits, fourteen plumbing, nineteen electrical, eleven fire, and one mechanical totaling fifty-one permits were issued, and fees collected in the sum of \$7,423 for the period. The Historical Committee met last on August 31<sup>st</sup>, and their current budget is \$3,388.13, the trust fund has a total of \$833.15. The Historical Committee also has a collection of Christmas ornaments for sale, if anyone is interested, please talk to Mr. Fidacaro. The library will host Halloween Witchy Woman. There was also work done at the Max Porter sign. The next LBOT meeting will be September 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Bray – Nothing to report.

Councilwoman Melitsky – For property maintenance during the period of August 11<sup>th</sup> through September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, thirty-two inspections were done, twenty violations were given, and nine violations were issued for a total of \$3,500.

Council President Carra – The Regional Center Partnership will have a meeting again Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom. For the Planning Board, at the last meeting there were five applications for hearings, one with a minor site plan, looking at putting a second story on a garage, which was carried until the meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup>. A minor site plan with variances for a liquor store and ice cream shop has been adjourned and will be re-noticed until September 27. The Colfax Apartments at 17 and 19 Colfax Street. have been heard and they had preliminary approval. Valley Wellness amended their conditional plan for transportation of offsite parking for employees and added a sidewalk on Anderson Street in front of their building. The next Planning Board meeting will be September 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Hutzler – For Recreation, the pickleball court at the Basilone Park should be completed soon and the Frelinghuysen Basketball Court redo should begin by the end of September. Yoga classes will begin on October 1 10 a.m. at Frelinghuysen – information can be found on the Raritan Recreation Facebook Page. The annual Trunk or Treat is scheduled for October 28 with a rain date of October 19. Municipal Court for the month of August 2023, total cases filed 188 with 208 total cases disposed, the total amount collected was \$19,619.35. The total amount to the Borough was \$8,573.20. For Economic Development no meeting was held in August and their next meeting is scheduled for September 12 at 7 p.m. The Economic Development Committee is requesting to have one more Waterfront Music night on September 30, 2023.

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve a Waterfront Music Night for the Economic Development Committee.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to Approve the Waterfront Music Night for the Economic Development Committee.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x  
Abstain: x  
Absent: x  
Motion Carried: 6-0

**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 the Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the public to wishing to speak.

Joyce Friche, 445 Vanderver Road: Mrs. Friche said she was concerned about a post she saw on Facebook saying Route 202 was going to be widened from Quick Avenue to the circle and wanted confirmation on whether this was true.

Council President Carra said this is true, the State plan is to widen Route 202, and he can send her the plans.

Tom Brown, Elmer Street: Mr. Brown said part of the Fair Share Housing Plan for the Borough is using funds for rehabilitation of certain homes and it might be appropriate with the Habitat for Humanity to be able to use some of those funds. He was also concerned about the advertisement of the Fair Share Housing Plan.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Recorded Vote:  
All in favor  
Motion Passed: 6-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Allorah Zigray  
Administrative Assistant

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Eric M. Colvin  
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_