

MINUTES

BOROUGH OF RARITAN REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 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, October 3, 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 Fritzingler, Councilwoman Hutzler,
Councilwoman Melitsky, Councilman Orozco

Also Present: Administrator/Clerk Colvin, Borough Attorney William Robertson, Borough
Engineer Stanley Schrek, Borough Engineer Joesph Brosnan

Absent: Councilman Armahizer
*Mayor Bray entered at 6:42 p.m.

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilman Fritzingler

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2023-10-162

Entering Executive Session

1. Personnel
Administration, Police
2. Contract Negotiations
Hidden Pond
3. Attorney Client
Orlando Drive

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilman Orozco, Council moved to
Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-162.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Armahizer

Motion Carried: 5-0

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

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

MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting – September 5, 2023

Council President Carra stated that he noticed two recorded vote errors on the minutes that needed fixing, but otherwise they were good.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to approve the minutes with the minor fixes.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Armahizer

Motion Carried: 5-0

OLD BUSINESS

1. Columbus Avenue Drainage (SS)

Borough Engineer Joseph Brosnan stated that the Columbus Avenue drainage project was approved by the County and the bid documents can be completed and sent into DOT, once reviewed, they will be moving forward. Council President Carra asked if the County approved the closure of Columbus Avenue for the project, Borough Engineer Brosnan and Borough Engineer Stanley Schrek confirmed this. Borough Engineer Schrek added that they can bid this project over winter.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Ribbons (NC)

Council President Carra stated that resident Jill Brown of Elmer Street is requesting permission to hang purple bows created by Scott's Florist along Somerset Street. Purple is the national color for October for domestic violence awareness, the bows are to honor the courage of survivors who broke free and a memory of those who did not, he said, adding

that violence affects many spouses, children, pets and first responders. Council President Carra requested permission to have all 33 bows hung on Somerset Street.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to approve the purple ribbon display.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Armahizer

Motion Carried: 5-0

2. Recreation Survey (NC)

Council President Carra reminded residents that the recreation survey is still available to be taken. It is located on the Borough website and also posted by recreation, he said, adding that the Borough is looking for feedback from everybody in town, including children, teenagers, parents, grandparents, etc.

3. New Plaques for Nevius Street Bridge (PO)

Councilman Orozco said he would like to get approval for the broken plaques on the benches on the Nevius Street Bridge to be fixed or replaced. Council expressed agreement.

4. Parking Lot Ribbon Cutting (NC)

Council President Carra stated that tonight on the agenda is the adoption of Ordinance No. 2023-16 to open the parking lot at the future municipal complex. The Economic Development Committee will host a ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday, October 7, 2023, at 1 p.m., he said.

5. Elizabeth Avenue Basketball Court (PO)

Councilman Orozco asked Borough Engineer Stanley Schrek about the cost of repaving the basketball court at Elizabeth Avenue. Borough Engineer Schrek stated that he would estimate it at around \$10,000.00 and suggested they should wait for spring when there may be a contractor in that area. Borough Engineer Schrek added that DPW is looking into quotes for this, Councilman Orozco stated he wants it on the record that he wants this done now and doesn't want to wait for it to be done on the side when another project in the area is being done. Councilman Orozco asked for a motion to have the basketball court on Elizabeth Avenue be included in the DOT contract project in spring 2024.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to include the basketball court in the spring 2024 DOT project.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Armahizer

Motion Carried: 5-0

6. Redesignating Regional Center Partnership (EC)

Mayor Bray stated that this is being eliminated from new business and will appear as a resolution on tonight's consent agenda.

7. Banner Request (EC)

Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that the Borough received a banner request from the Philippine Nurses Association of Somerset County Chapter of the New Jersey Association to hang a banner on Somerset Street for their October 28, 2023, 5K/2-mile walk and health fair event that will take place at Duke Island Park.

Administrator/Clerk Colvin asked for a motion to grant permission to hang the banner.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to approve the banner request.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Armahizer

Motion Carried: 5-0

ORDINANCE – SECOND READING & PUBLIC HEARING

Ordinance No. 2023-16

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Amending Chapter 82, Vehicles and Traffic, Part 5, Private and Semi-Public Areas, of the Borough Code to Add a New Article, Article XVI.B in Entitled Borough Park Lot at 9 West Somerset Street

Mayor Bray opened the Public Hearing for any members of the Public wishing to be heard concerning Ordinance No. 2023-16.

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

On motion by Councilman Fritzingler, seconded by (inaudible), Council moved to Adopt Ordinance No. 2023-16.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: Armahizer

Motion Carried: 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

(Resolution Nos. 2023-10-163 – 2023-10-168)

Resolution No. 2023-10-163	Redesignating Regional Center Partnership
Resolution No. 2023-10-164	Authorizing Cancellation of Outstanding Checks – Current Account
Resolution No. 2023-10-165	Authorizing Cancellation of Outstanding Checks – Payroll Account
Resolution No. 2023-10-166	Authorizing Cancellation of Outstanding Checks – Trust Account
Resolution No. 2023-10-167	Authorizing Emergency Contract – Servpro
Resolution No. 2023-10-168	Approving Transportation Service Agreement & Waiver

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve the Consent Agenda – Resolution Nos. 2023-10-163 through 2023-10-168.

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

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: Armahizer
Motion Carried: 5-0

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2023-10-169 Approving Bill List

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-169.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-169.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco
Nay: x
Abstain: x
Absent: Armahizer
Motion Carried: 5-0

CERTIFICATION OF FUNDS

1. Absolute Fire Protection Company – \$21,720.33 – Emergency Repairs on Engine 52-102

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky seconded by Councilman Fritzingler, Council moved to Approve the above repairs on Engine 52-102 in the amount of \$21,720.33.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky, Orozco
Nay: x

Abstain: x
Absent: Armahizer
Motion Carried: 5-0

COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Armahizer – Absent.

Councilman Orozco – For the Board of Education, back to school night was last week. The Councilman said he was asked to reiterate that the referendum on the election ballot this year is for funding a full-day kindergarten.

For the Basilone Parade Committee, Councilman Orozco said will meet tomorrow, October 4, 2023, at the Raritan Public Library at 7 p.m. to discuss the possibility of doing something else in place of the rained out 2023 Basilone Parade to still show their honor.

Councilman Fritzing – Reported that all routine street and sewer maintenance is being done by Public Works. Public Works also power-washed the Frelinghuysen dugouts in preparation to be painted, maintained all athletic fields, cleaned the shop and municipal building daily, cleaned and maintained the train station and did electronics drop offs the Councilman said.

For the period of September 15, 2023, through October 2, 2023, Councilman Fritzing reported that the building department issued five building permits, seven plumbing permits, 12 electrical, six fire and three mechanical, totaling 33 with fees collected to the Borough in the amount of \$44,459.

He said the Historic and Cultural Committee met on September 20, 2023, their current budget still stands at \$3,138.13, and their trust fund has an availability of \$833.15. Adding that they are looking into fundraising and plan to sell Christmas ornaments at the Raritan library he said. They have also been working very diligently on a Knox Porter banner and have recently acquired antique plaques from the Washington School which they hope to add to the monument.

Councilman Fritzing also added that there will be a Halloween Witchy Woman presentation at 6 p.m. on October 27, 2023.

Mayor Bray – Nothing to report.

Council President Carra – Thanked the Borough's new CFO, Paige Elster, who started today as a shared service with Somerville. Council President Carra reported that at the Planning Board's last meeting, three resolutions were passed, including Jansen Pharmaceuticals, Colfax Apartments and Valley Wellness. Council President Carra reported a few hearings also took place and added that the next Planning Board meeting is set for October 25, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Regional Center Partnership met on September 20, 2023, progress is still being made on updating their website, they meet next on November 8, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. on Zoom he said.

Councilwoman Melitsky – For property maintenance during the period of September 18, 2023, through September 29, 2023, 17 inspections were done, and four violations were issued.

Councilwoman Melitsky said for the Police Department, they assisted with the Manila Madness 5K on September 23, 2023, and they are also gearing up to participate in No-Shave November which runs from October 1, 2023, through November 30, 2023. During this time, officers are permitted to grow beards and participating officers will make a donation to cancer research or a charitable organization, anyone who would like to donate can do so by clicking the link provided on the Raritan Borough Police Department's Facebook page. The Police Department

will be hosting Operation Take-Back-New-Jersey on Saturday, October 28, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., where residents can drop off unused, unwanted, or expired medications to the Police Department (21 First Street, Raritan Borough). There is always a drop-off called Project Medicine Dropbox at the Police Department the Councilwoman said.

Councilwoman Hutzler – Reminded everyone that the Economic Development Committee’s ribbon cutting will take place this Saturday, October 7, 2023, at 1 p.m. and all are welcome, adding that their next meeting is set for October 10, 2023, at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

For Recreation, the Frelinghuysen basketball court repairs are underway, the footing was poured today for the basketball nets. Trunk-or-Treat is scheduled for October 28, 2023, from 1 to 3 p.m., with a rain date of October 29, 2023, adding that trunks are needed, and local businesses are welcome. Anyone who wants to sign up can contact Recreation Director Andy Sibilica. For the latest information, please follow Raritan Recreation on Facebook and Instagram she said.

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 wishing to speak.

Catherine Debellis, 17 Doughty Street: Mrs. Debellis asked if the street signs for First Avenue and Third Street near the traffic light are included in the replacement of street signs and polls that Councilman Armahizer mentioned, because they are very faded. Mayor Bray stated that they need to confirm whether that area falls under the County or the Borough, but that street sign can be included either way.

Michael Pepe, 810 Old York Road, Apt. 2: Mr. Pepe, a member of the Board of Education, thanked Councilman Orozco for his report on the Board of Education and stated that back to school night for JFK was very well attended, adding that the Principal Russo, commented on what a great crowd it was. Mr. Pepe stated the last Board of Education meeting there was a presentation on security across the district, where some of the professionals who are working to monitor the campuses were introduced. Mr. Pepe reported that everyone thanked the Bridgewater and Raritan Police Departments for doing great work at JFK, adding that they are very reliable and consistent, which is appreciated by the Board and the district, adding that the students look forward to the Police Officers coming by.

Jim Fidacaro, 812 Lynwood Street: Mr. Fidacaro thanked the Recreation Committee and all responsible for their recent survey and asked if the results would be public. Council President Carra said yes. Mr. Fidacaro stated that he heard tonight that there is a proposal for \$8,000-\$10,000 repairs for the Frelinghuysen basketball courts but the basketball court at Washington Park never received its second net and never had lines painted, which is overdue by 14 years he said. Mr. Fidacaro would like to see the survey include the number of students in the neighborhood, the number of people who are using the parks, and which park repairs need to be made first before the Borough spends money on parks that may not be utilized.

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: 5-0

Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Bray reminded everyone that the next council meeting is set for Tuesday, October 17, 2023, 6:30 p.m. executive session, 7 p.m. regular session.

Alyssa Cornella
Administrative Assistant/Deputy Registrar/BOH Representative

Approved: _____
Eric M. Colvin
Borough Clerk/Administrator

Date: _____