

MINUTES

BOROUGH OF RARITAN REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 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, October 17, 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 Fritzinger, Councilwoman Hutzler

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

Absent: x

*Councilwoman Melitsky and Councilman Orozco entered at 6:32 p.m.

INVOCATION AND FLAG SALUTE

Councilwoman Hutzler

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2023-10-170

Entering Executive Session

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

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-170.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzinger, 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 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 members of the Public, Mayor Bray closed Public Comment.

MINUTES

None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Elizabeth Avenue Basketball Court (PO)

Councilman Orozco stated that at the last Council meeting they made a motion to tack-on the paving of the Elizabeth Avenue Basketball Court to a bigger road project, but he would like to make a motion to have it paved as a standalone project as soon as budget and weather allow.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Councilman Armahizer, Council moved to Deny Paving Elizabeth Avenue Basketball Court as a Standalone Project.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Armahizer, Orozco

Nay: Carra, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 2-4

NEW BUSINESS

1. Engineer's Report (SS/JB)

Borough Engineer Joseph Brosnan delivered the following engineer's 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. 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.

Update: As of September, Raritan is currently working with NJDOT to modify the agreement for final design.

2023 CDBG Grant – Busky Lane Sewer Improvements

We received a CDBG grant to make repairs to increase the size of the existing sanitary sewer system near Busky Lane and Orlando Drive. Our staff are organizing initial design documents and preparing to conduct and coordinate field investigations to determine the state of the existing sewer and analyze its existing capacity.

Update: Borough Administrator/CFO was given all documents needed to “activate” the grant. Our office is still making progress on the initial development.

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 punchlist to avoid discrepancies. Upon receipt of comments from the NJDOT, our office will finalize a punchlist and close out of construction administration.

Update: NJDOT has issued their comments which our office is in the process of addressing.

2022 NJDOT- Arnold, Berwick and Colby

Our office has finalized drawings but is waiting on final approval from NJDOT to begin the bidding process. Documents are otherwise ready and authorization by council has already been approved.

Update: NJDOT Comments received and addressed, however we are suggesting an extension to next year for better weather. Revised plans were submitted to the NJDOT so there are no obstructions for next year.

2023 NJDOT – Drainage Improvements

The Borough has been awarded a NJDOT Local Aid Grant in the amount of **\$347,580**. Fieldwork has been completed; construction drawings are being prepared as well as a report summarizing the findings as presented previously.

Update: County has approved our design, and we will have submitted the preliminary bid package to the NJDOT for their review by the end of the week.

Raritan Crossing Redevelopment

Preliminary Approval was granted on March 22. A TWA Permit Application was endorsed by our office with authorization from Council.

Update: We are waiting for final site plan application to be submitted by the Applicant. It is assumed that this will occur within the year.

Raritan Mall Redevelopment

The Planning Board has recommended preparation of a Redevelopment Plan. We are working in conjunction with the Redevelopment Attorney. The property owner has submitted an application for NJDEP Flood Hazard Determination. An economic impact assessment was

prepared. Our office is reviewing the documents to determine the best course of action for a Redevelopment Plan.

MS4 Compliance (Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan)

The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SPPP) is the main document used in MS4 Compliance. Our office is in the process of updating it before the end of the month to secure funding with the NJDEP. Once completed, our office will circulate a copy to persons of interest within the Borough (DPW, Police, etc.) Submission with the NJDEP is necessary to receive funding from the \$25,000.00 grant as well as the completion of a stormwater inventory.

Update: DPW has provided comments. Our office will revise the plan and resubmit to the State. We are beginning the process of developing the MS4 Infrastructure Inventory to secure the remaining money.

Stormwater Ordinances

Upon review of the recently released Inland Flood Protection Rules which are the NJDEP's latest revisions to the Stormwater Regulations, this office recommends repealing and replacing all of Chapter 315 with the revised Stormwater Ordinances. Our final submission will include all of the recent model ordinances that will be adapted to the Borough of Raritan's current policies.

Update: We are coordinating with the Environmental Commission on the tree removal ordinance, but plan on updating all of the ordinances later this year.

MS4 Compliance (Municipal Stormwater Management Plan)

Our office has begun looking into revising and updating the Municipal Stormwater Management Plan as per the MS4 Compliance requirements. This item was last updated in 2008 and should be updated at every Re-examination of the Master Plan.

Frelinghuysen Pool Leak Investigation

Our office is working with the Department of Public Works to investigate the issues with the existing Frelinghuysen Pool.

Update: Our office met with the DPW director and determined that the issues with the pool were extensive and would require a project with a public bid. Rough estimates on cost were over \$200,000.00. Based on this it may be more effective and efficient to move the proposed splash park from Basilone to Frelinghuysen, and work on reactivating the Frelinghuysen Pool instead.

2024 NJDOT Municipal Aid Grant

Applications for the 2024 Municipal Aid Grants are due July 1. Our office is in the process of preparing an application to do drainage work similar to the 2023 NJDOT Drainage Improvements grant. Our intent is to resolve similar issues on the other side of Rhine Boulevard. Once we have more information, our office will request a resolution from the Council to submit to the NJDOT.

Update: Our application was submitted to the NJDOT last month. We will report back once we know the results of the grant applications.

New Municipal Building

9 West Washington was secured as the site of the new municipal building. A grant was received that fully funds the rehabilitation of the building. We are coordinating with an architect to revise the interior, and our office is providing a new layout to the site plan that we will present to the land use board for a courtesy review upon completion. This may also include a revision to the zoning of the lot.

2. **Fifth & Farrand Streets (NC)**

Council President Carra stated that Councilwoman Melitsky will be speaking on Fifth Street, but Farrand Street and Vones Lane have multiple complaints about speeding, adding that the Police Department is thinking about putting up a speed monitor on Vones and he would like to see if they can get a grant for those.

3. **First Avenue & Fifth Street (JM)**

Councilwoman Melitsky stated that she has had multiple complaints and concerns from residents about speeding and blind spots on First Avenue and Fifth Street, adding that a cyclist was recently hit by a motorcycle due to the blind spots on First Ave. The Councilwoman suggested making Farrand and Fifth streets righthand turns only and she asked Council for their opinions, a brief discussion ensued which resulted in Administrator/Clerk Colvin needing to reach out to County.

4. **Historic & Cultural Committee Requests (EC)**

Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that each year the Historic & Cultural Committee requests to hang a banner for Knox Porter through most of July and they are asking for an annual approval to hang the banner. Mayor and Council openly discussed this and unanimously agreed that all banner requests need to continue to be made each year. Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that the Historic & Cultural Committee requested to hang the sign they received from the School District on the North side of the Washington School monument structure, there was brief conversation on the location which ended with Administrator/Clerk Colvin needing to request more information from HCC. Administrator/Clerk Colvin also reported that the Historic & Cultural Committee is requesting storage space at the Anderson Street Firehouse when it gets redone, adding that they are requesting insulation, drywall, plywood flooring, heating/cooling to keep the temperature regulated, which would eliminate their current \$1,500 yearly storage unit cost. In the meantime, the Historic & Cultural Committee may need to rent a larger unit and hopefully they can be added to the Anderson Street Firehouse budget next year.

5. **Bill Lists & Certification of Funds (EC)**

Administrator/Clerk Colvin stated that this would be tabled.

6. **New Junior Fire Department Member – Jaiden Crooks (JM)**

Councilwoman Melitsky stated that Jaiden Crooks is a new Junior Firefighter and would like to thank and welcome him.

ORDINANCE – INTRODUCTION

Ordinance No. 2023-17

An Ordinance of the Borough of Raritan, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey Amending Chapter 92 (Animals) of the Borough Code to Add a New Article VIII Entitled, Potentially Dangerous or Vicious Dogs

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-17 – Amending Chapter 92.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilwoman Melitsky, Council moved to Introduce Ordinance No. 2023-17.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Carra, Armahizer, Fritzingler, Hutzler, Melitsky

Nay: x

Abstain: Orozco

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 5-0

ORDINANCE – SECOND READING & PUBLIC HEARING

None

RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 2023-10-171

Providing for Mandatory Direct Deposit for all
Employees

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-171 - Mandatory Direct Deposit for all Employees.

On a motion by Councilman Orozco, seconded by Council President Carra, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-171.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

CONSENT AGENDA

None

BILL LIST

Resolution No. 2023-10-172

Approving Bill List

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-172 - Approving Bill List.

On a motion by Councilwoman Melitsky, seconded by Councilwoman Hutzler, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2023-10-172- Approving Bill List.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

CERTIFICATION OF FUNDS

1. Van Cleef Engineering – \$22,778.25 – Various Professional Services
2. Bridgewater Resources – \$23,008.50 – September Dumping Fees

Mayor Bray asked for a motion to Approve Certification of Funds in Unison.

On a motion by Council President Carra, seconded by Councilman Armahizer. Council moved to Approve the Van Cleef Engineering and Bridgewater Resources Fees.

Recorded Vote

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

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Absent: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Councilman Armahizer – Reported that the Environmental Commission held their first ever River Cleanup event on September 23, 2023, as part of Raritan’s Clean Communities Initiative, more than a dozen volunteers collected over 10 full trash bags of debris and pollution along Canal Street. The Councilman thanked the Environmental Commission and DPW for all their hard work with the cleanup, the next the Environmental Commission meeting will be held Thursday, October 19, 2023, in the Council Chambers.

Councilman Armahizer stated that the October Board of Health meeting was cancelled, their next meeting will be November 15, 2023, in the Council Chambers.

Councilman Orozco – For the Board of Education, Councilman Orozco reminded everyone that there is a referendum for full day kindergarten on the November ballot.

Councilman Orozco stated that the Basilone Parade Committee met last week to discuss doing something for the cancelled 2023 parade, but unfortunately, they cannot put on the parade this year. Mayor Bray asked if there was discussion about the caravan parade, they did during COVID, Councilman Orozco stated that the Basilone Parade Committee agree that it is too complicated with all the people who are involved in the parade to make that a feasible option and they are leaning towards having a rain date in the future.

Councilman Fritzingler – Reported that DPW completed all routine street maintenance, athletic field maintenance and they put a lot of hard work into setting up the town for the Basilone Parade, which they take a lot of pride in. The last bulk pickup will be November 15, 2023, and bulk will resume in March 2024.

The Councilman stated that the Historic and Cultural Committee will be meeting October 18, 2023, at the Raritan Borough Public Library at 6:30 p.m. – all are welcome. Also at the library, on October 27, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. HCC will be hosting Halloween with the Witchy Woman he added.

For the period of October 3, 2023, through October 13, 2023, the building department issued three building permits, six plumbing permits, three electrical, two fire and one mechanical, totaling 15 with fees collected to the Borough in the amount of \$785.00 the Councilman reported.

Mayor Bray – Nothing to report.

Council President Carra – Reported that the Planning Board will meet October 25, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, their agenda isn't posted yet, but he added that they should be discussing an application for the corner of Tillman/Raritan Avenue.

The Regional Center Partnership doesn't meet in October, their next meeting is Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. on Zoom he stated.

Council President Carra stated he had nothing to report for Finance.

Councilwoman Melitsky – Nothing to report.

Councilwoman Hutzler – For Recreation, the Frelinghuysen basketball court is in the midst of construction and should be completed in a few weeks. Trunk-or-Treat is on Saturday, October 28, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. located at JFK School – residents can still sign up their trunks, businesses are welcome she stated.

Councilwoman Hutzler shared that the Economic Development Committee is thrilled to announce an event on Saturday, November 25, 2023, called Small Business Saturday BINGO – their goal is to support and promote local Raritan businesses by bringing together the community for a fun-filled day of exploration and shopping with specially designed BINGO boards. EDC would also like to welcome Ill Forno Alegna to Raritan as a new business.

For Municipal Court September 2023, 147 total cases were filed, 161 total cases were disposed, total amount collected was \$18,271.99, total amount to the Borough was \$9,460.10 the Councilwoman reported.

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.

Don Tozzi, 51 Anderson Street: Thanked Council, specifically Council President Carra, for handling the purchase of PNC bank, adding that local businesses are overwhelmed for the free parking in the back.

Councilwoman Melitsky added that it was nice to see the business owners at the ribbon cutting, confirming that they were ecstatic about the parking.

Abdul Ferozan, 25 Anderson Street: Voiced his concern about a parking lot his neighbor built that is causing flooding on his property at 52 Thompson Street and his concern for the environmental impact this can have on the community. Mr. Ferozan mentioned that the neighbor has also built a wall on his property and the parking lot is pitched towards his house. There was a brief discussion between Mr. Ferozan, Borough Engineer Joseph Brosnan and Mayor Bray resulting in Mr. Ferozan and Borough Engineer Brosnan exchanging contact information.

Tom Brown, 18 Elmer Street: Stated that the neighborhood near the Elizabeth Avenue basketball court is mature and he asked who recreation hopes to attract with the upgrades. Councilman Orozco

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stated that multiple parents from that neighborhood have approached him with concerns about the state of the basketball court. Mr. Brown expressed his opinion on the fields at Washington School and his thoughts on renting out the fields out to schools, he also stated that he believes the Elizabeth Avenue basketball court should be fixed after winter when it'll be used.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Bray entertained for a motion to Adjourn the Regular Meeting.

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 7:53 p.m.

Mayor Bray reminded everyone that the next council meeting is set for Tuesday, November 21, 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: _____