

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Annual Reorganization Meeting of the Raritan Borough Council was called to order by Mayor Charles McMullin at 12:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Meeting Room of the Borough of Raritan Municipal Building at 22 First Street, Raritan, NJ 08869.

**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Mayor McMullin read the following statement:

This Annual Reorganization Meeting was called pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate Notice of this meeting was posted in the Municipal Building, made available on the Borough website, the Office of the Borough Clerk and communicated to *The Courier News* and *The Star Ledger* on November 22, 2017.

**PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Relief Hose Company No. 2 was unable to attend the meeting.

**INVOCATION**

Rev. John Rozembajgier, of The Catholic Church of St. Ann, delivered the Invocation.

**FLAG SALUTE**

Councilman Robert McGinley led the Flag Salute.

**OATH OF OFFICE – COUNCIL**

Mayor McMullin administered the Oath of Office to the following, newly-elected members of the Borough Council:

Councilman Pablo Orozco  
Councilman Donald Tozzi

**ROLL CALL – MAYOR & COUNCIL**

Borough Administer Jaxel called the following names for Roll Call:

Present: Councilman Bray, Councilman Carra, Councilman Giraldi, Councilman McGinley, Councilman Orozco, Councilman Tozzi  
Absent: x  
Also Present: Borough Administrator Jaxel, Borough Clerk Colvin, Attorney Paul Rizzo

**ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT & OATH OF OFFICE**

Mayor McMullin asked for a nomination for Council President.

On motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman McGinley, Council moved to Elect Councilman Tozzi to the position of Council President.

**Recorded Vote**

Yea: Bray, Carra, Giraldi, McGinley, Orozco, Tozzi  
Nay: x  
Abstain: x  
Motion Carried: 6-0

Mayor McMullin administered the Oath of Office to Council President Tozzi.

**RESOLUTION & OATH OF OFFICE – MUNICIPAL JUDGE**

On motion by Councilman Bray, seconded by Councilman Carra, Council Adopted Resolution 2018-01-19, Appointing Municipal Court Judge Katherine E. Howes.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, Carra, Giraldi, McGinley, Orozco, Tozzi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

Mayor McMullin asked Municipal Judge Katherine E. Howes and her husband to come to the front of the Meeting Room. The Mayor then administered the Oath of Office to Judge Howes.

**STATE OF THE BOROUGH**

Mayor McMullin delivered the following address:

Distinguished Guests, Families and Friends: Happy New Year and best wishes for a Healthy and Prosperous 2018.

This year, 2018, marks the 70th Anniversary of Raritan Borough as a municipality. However, our town's history extends back over 300 years to 1683 when the British Royalty deeded to John Robertson a 660-acre plot of land known as Rariton.

One-Hundred and Eighty-Five years later, Raritan Town was officially created by the NJ Legislature on April 3, 1868. Fast-forward another 115 years, the NJ Legislature authorized Raritan to become a fully independent Borough by legislation passed on May 12, 1948.

I'd like to recognize Raritan's First Mayor Rocco Miele as well as our First Borough Clerk Nick Esposito and Judge Algar who were very instrumental in Raritan becoming an independent Municipality.

It has been said that "What we call the present is given shape by an accumulation of the past." On this basis, I want to thank all previous mayors and councils and all the people who served on various boards and committees throughout the years.

Today it is our turn and our responsibility to shape the future of Raritan. I look forward to working with all elected and appointed officials to put "Raritan First." I thank them and all the many people who volunteer on the many boards and committees for their willingness to serve. We could not do it without our citizens stepping up to share their time and talents.

During my First State of the Borough address I made the analogy that Raritan was like a candle under a Bushel Basket and the Governing Body, Administration and people of Raritan will work to remove that Bushel Basket so Raritan could shine once again. Two years ago, we were mired in litigation, several structures were in absolute disrepair and our local economy was beginning to recover from the Great Recession. The time was right, and we embraced revitalization to get Raritan back on track.

Last year in the "State of the Borough" address, we identified nine specific initiatives. Happily, the Governing Body in cooperation with Somerset County and NJDOT has completed or made great progress on every initiative.

Quick update on our progress in 2017:

January 1, 2018  
Annual Reorganization Meeting

- 1) Raritan Renew: All five sites specified in 2016 address have been demolished or in the process of significant rehabilitation. Other sites have been identified and the renewal process continues.
- 2) Improve Housing and Property-related Ordinances – Our initial mission was accomplished and the results are very visible throughout the Borough. Notwithstanding, there remains more work to do on improving our quality of life in Raritan.
- 3) ReAlignment & Extension of First Ave/202 Jug Handle – Meetings and dialogue continued. I am encouraged that NJDOT is currently in design to relocate the jug handle. It is our hope and expectation this design is completed in 2017, and construction bids in early 2019. Once again, many thanks to Senator Doherty and Al Gaburo for working with NJDOT, Somerset County and our Governing Body on this initiative.
- 4) Adjustment of First Ave traffic flow: First Avenue is a County road and I'd like to thank Somerset County for excellent cooperation with the Borough to facilitate traffic light adjustments under their jurisdiction and supporting Raritan's Governing Body's formal request to NJDOT to reconfigure the State's traffic Light at First Ave and Route 202. Also, special thanks for repaving the entire length of First Ave.
- 5) Restart Firehouse Preservation – Attention was given to the original grant to preserve Raritan's first firehouse. The exterior work phase is materially complete and interior design work has started. The Governing Body selected a new Architect for this remaining work. The Raritan Historic & Cultural Committee and Fire Department representatives are working with the Architect on the interior phase of the project.
- 6) Senior Citizen Housing – The Governing Body approved an area (former sewing factory and Rescue Squad lots) along LaGrange Street as a Redevelopment Area and specifying its use as Senior Citizen Housing. The Planning Board studied the area and determined that it was in need of redevelopment. The Updated Master Plan incorporates such changes.
- 7) Return of Washington School property to Raritan. Remediation and demolition of this structure are complete and the Washington School Monument is under construction. Many thanks to the Somerset County Freeholders and their very professional staff.
- 8) Security and Veterans Memorial Park – The design and construction of Veterans Park in under a year is quite an amazing accomplishment. This addition to the County Park System in Raritan is truly the realization of decades of planning by many and a special thanks to the Somerset County Parks Commission and our Freeholders. In 2017, Veterans Park was actively used during the Basilone Parade, Raritan's Veterans Day services, and the County's Wreaths across America service. This is a magnificent memorial tribute to Veterans!
- 9) Establishment of a Linear Park – This parcel of land along the Raritan River between Route 206 and Nevius Street Walk bridge is planned as a future park area in conjunction with Somerset County. Material progress has been made, but there are still issues to be resolved.

I'd also like to mentioned some other material initiatives and events that occurred in 2017:

- 1) Municipal Street repaving and installation of experimental speed control humps. Paving included: Sherman Ave, Bell Ave, Southwick Street, Victoria Street and east portion of

Railroad Ave. Experimental Speed Humps are located on Sherman and Bell Avenues – and so far, so good – they appear to be working as planned.

- 2) Plant and Property improvements to Raritan Mall – These improvements were completed in late 2017 in a cooperative effort between the Borough Officials, RAIT Financial and our Municipal Court. Unfortunately, this effort was just not sufficient for Stop & Shop to remain. Hopefully, these site improvements will make it easier to attract a new anchor store and associated tenants.
- 3) NJ Transportation Planning Authority \$1,000,000 grant of Federal Funds to Raritan Borough – Raritan received considerable funds for pedestrian-friendly access along Anderson and Thompson Street from our Train Station to our Downtown. Also included are Nevius Street and the westerly portion of Orlando Drive for ultimate connection across Nevius Street Bridge to the North Access Gate of Duke Farms.
- 4) Resolution of the so-called Fair-Share litigation – We aggressively worked and resolved the litigation instituted last summer against Raritan Borough and Raritan Planning Board. This legal albatross brought to a ‘head’ the entire COAH issue that has been festering for decades. Its resolution has thankfully put an end to the COAH recurring expenses that spanned many years. The Public and Private sectors now have certainty in Raritan.
- 5) Last but not least, I want recognize the extraordinary commitment by the Planning Board member and professionals to Raritan during 2017. Many may not be aware that Planning Board scheduled double sessions in 2017 in response to building applications queue. They ‘stepped up’ in meeting frequency and personal home study to act upon multiple major applications that have substantial economic significance to our tax base and positive economic impact on our downtown businesses.

Our look forward in 2018 is defined by the following:

- 1) Completion of the unfinished projects previously discussed.
- 2) Managing through the disruptive transition from project approvals to completion of construction.
- 3) Carefully planning for the challenges of managing expenses as we await the anticipated tax revenue from these approved projects.
- 4) Selection and implementation of labor saving smart technology to control expenses while improving services to our residents and businesses.
- 5) Restart of the planning process for new Police and Fire Facilities as Block 81 progresses from paperwork and drawings to reality.
- 6) Revitalization of our downtown as the spillover economics of these projects accrue to our local economy.
- 7) Integration of our Train Station and weekend parking availability with Duke Farms.

- 8) Continue to explore initiatives to improve Raritan's Quality of Life for the people who live and work in our town.

I congratulate the 2017 Governing Body on a successful year and I am looking forward to working with Raritan's 2018 Governing Body.

In conclusion, our Events Committee has been busy planning a series of programs and events throughout 2018 to celebrate our 70th anniversary. I urge you to come out to these events, to meet your neighbors, and to celebrate together as we see Raritan beginning to shine bright.

Mayor McMullin asked Council members if they wished to speak.

No members of the Governing Body wished to speak.

### **ADOPTION OF 2018 GENERAL RULES OF ORDER**

Mayor McMullin called for a motion on the Adoption of the 2018 General Rules of Order, Resolution No. 2018-01-01.

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman Carra, Council moved to Approve Resolution No. 2018-01-01.

### **Recorded Vote**

Yea: Bray, Carra, Giraldi, McGinley, Orozco, Tozzi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

### **2018 COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES**

Mayor McMullin acknowledged the following 2018 Standing Committees:

Administration & Personnel	1. Councilman McGinley 2. Councilman Carra
Engineering & Public Works	1. Councilman Tozzi 2. Councilman Bray
Finance	1. Councilman Carra 2. Councilman Tozzi
Police	1. Councilman Giraldi 2. Councilman Orozco
Public & Private Properties	1. Councilman Bray 2. Councilman McGinley
Public Safety	1. Councilman Orozco 2. Councilman Giraldi

**2018 COUNCIL LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS**

Mayor McMullin acknowledged the following 2018 Council Liaison Assignments:

Board of Health Municipal Court	Councilman Carra
Building Department Property Maintenance	Councilman McGinley
Solid Waste Advisory Somerset County Waste Water Management Board of Education	Councilman Orozco
Historic & Cultural Committee Office of Emergency Management Sports and Facilities Committee	Councilman Bray
Basilone Parade Committee Environmental Commission	Councilman Giraldi
Regional Center Partnership Programs and Events Committee	Councilman Tozzi

**MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS *without Consent of Council***

Mayor McMullin announced the following appointments, which do not require Council consent:

Environmental Commission 3-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2020	Member – Olga Metaxas Member – Carrie Tozzi
Historic and Cultural Committee 3-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2020	Member – Karen Eastlund Member – James Fidacaro Member – Edward Ruzbarsky Member – Joyce Tronolone Alt. No. 1 – Pat Mastice Alt. No. 2 – Marie Lombardy
Municipal Land Use Board Terms Vary	Class III Member – 1-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2018 – Councilman Carra Class IV Member – 4-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2021 – Adele Goetsch Class IV Member – 4-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2021 – Debra Thomas Class IV Member – 4-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2021 – Thomas DeLaCruz Alt. No. 1 – 2-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2019 – Michael DeCicco Alt. No. 2 – 2-year term – 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2019 – David Forkus Alt. No. 3 – 2-year term – 1/1/2018 to

January 1, 2018  
Annual Reorganization Meeting

12/31/2019 – Eric Wilde  
Alt. No. 4 – 2-year term – 1/1/2018 to  
12/31/2019 – Jim Krajewski

Regional Center Executive Board  
1-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2018

Member – Mayor McMullin  
Member – Councilman Carra  
Member – Angela Knowles  
Member – Councilman Tozzi

Sold Waste Advisory  
1-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2018

Member – Councilman Orozco  
Member – Recycling Coordinator, Robert  
Fulminante

Somerset County Municipal Water Waste  
Management Plan Committee  
1-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2018

Elected Official Rep – Councilman Orozco  
Planning Board Chair – Rick Miller  
Borough Engineer – Stan Schrek  
SRVSA Member – Edward Machala  
Recycling Coordinator – Robert Fulminante

Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority  
5-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2022

Member – Edward Machala

Community Programs & Events Committee  
3-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2020

Member – Shannon Maher  
Member – Fred Sinagra  
Member – Hulya Has  
Coordinator – Linda Shulte \*One-Year Term

Sports & Facilities Committee Coordinator

Frank Locascio \*One-Year Term

**MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS *with Consent of Council***

Mayor McMullin announced the following appointments, which require Council consent:

Board of Health  
3-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2020

Member – Diane Lella  
Member – Anna Louise Bongiovi  
Member – Rosemary Cirriani

Library Board of Trustees  
5-year term, 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2022

Member – Umesh Agrawal  
\* 2018 BOE Rep. – Russell Lazovick

On a motion by Councilman Bray, seconded by Councilman McGinley, Council moved to Approve the Appointments Listed Above.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, Carra, Giraldi, McGinley, Orozco, Tozzi

Nay: x

Abstain: x  
Motion Carried: 6-0

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Resolution No. 2018-01-02	Appointment of Borough Attorney
Resolution No. 2018-01-03	Appointment of Bond Counsel
Resolution No. 2018-01-04	Appointment of Special Counsel
Resolution No. 2018-01-05	Appointment of Registered Municipal Accountant
Resolution No. 2018-01-06	Appointment of Insurance Agent
Resolution No. 2018-01-07	Appointment of Municipal Prosecutor
Resolution No. 2018-01-08	Appointment of Public Defender
Resolution No. 2018-01-09	Appointment of Administrative Officials
Resolution No. 2018-01-10	Appointment of Depositories/Financial Institutions
Resolution No. 2018-01-11	Appointment of Custodians of Accounts
Resolution No. 2018-01-12	Adoption of Temporary Budget
Resolution No. 2018-01-13	Resolution Fixing the Rate of Interest on Delinquent Taxes and Sewer
Resolution No. 2018-01-14	Resolution Canceling 2017 Property Tax Open Balances – Less Than \$10.00
Resolution No. 2018-01-15	Designation of Official Newspapers
Resolution No. 2018-01-16	Designation of Paid Holidays
Resolution No. 2018-01-17	Establishment of Calendar of Meetings
Resolution No. 2018-01-18	Appointment of Labor Attorney

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Council President Tozzi, Council moved to Approve the Consent Agenda.

Recorded Vote

Yea: Bray, Carra, Giraldi, McGinley, Orozco, Tozzi

Nay: x

Abstain: x

Motion Carried: 6-0

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor McMullin opened this Public Comment portion of the meeting for members of the Public wishing to speak. Neither seeing nor hearing any member of the Public, the Mayor closed this Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Mayor McMullin congratulated the new members of Council, Councilmen Orozco and Tozzi, as well as the newly appointed members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, before asking for a Motion to Adjourn.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councilman Giraldi, seconded by Councilman McGinley, Council moved to Adjourn the Meeting.

Recorded Vote

All in Favor

Motion Carried: 6-0

2018 Reorganization Meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

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Eric M. Colvin  
Borough Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_