

COMMISSIONERS CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES
RIDGEFIELD PARK
December 9, 2021
7:00 PM

Mayor Anlian announced that this meeting is being held in accordance with the “Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10 4-6 et seq.” notice of which was sent to the Record, and the Star Ledger on December 28, 2020 and was posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board and the Village Website.

ROLL CALL

Those present were Commissioners Gerken, MacNeill, Olson (7:11pm), Portorreal and Mayor Anlian in the chair.

Also, present: Philip Boggia, Village Attorney; Edward Monroe, DPW Superintendent and Tara O’Grady, Village Clerk.

CORRESPONDENCE

11-01 Notice of Public Hearing – 65 Challenger, LLC - Informational

12-01 Local Finance Notice 2021-24 - Informational

12-02 Sheila Y. Oliver, Lt. Governor – Road Improvement Grant - Informational

12-03 Sheila Y. Oliver, Lt. Governor – Combined Sewer Long Term Control Plan Grant - Informational

12-04 NJLM – Weekly Round-Up – Resolution to be prepared for December 14th meeting opposing Assembly Bills 1571 and 1576 and Senate Bill 1956

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION:

2021-124 Authorize Health Insurance Opt-Out Payments for Village Employees

The Police Department was in attendance and PBA Local 86 Representative Steven Fernandez read a statement pertaining to Resolution 2021-124. The PBA is concerned how the Board of Commissioners went about lowering the stipend for opting out of the health benefits and not providing ample notice to the members of the Police Department. He stated that if a handful of officers opt back into the health benefits; the Village would wipe out any savings.

Attorney Boggia advised this was discussed and decided on by the Board of Commissioners on December 8, 2020 and was a resolution was never adopted.

Sgt. Tress stated he would have opted back into the insurance but now has missed open enrollment.

Lt. Hippe was in attendance on behalf of the Police Chief and advised the Commissioners that the Chief is in agreement with his men. It is more concerning that the Commissioners had the entire year to notify and didn’t. If the Commissioners pass this resolution, it should not be this year. This resolution comes across as a personal attack. Why not get all numbers to see if the Village will actually save taxpayer money.

Mayor Anlian advised it is not meant to be a personal attack.

Sgt Cmielewski stated the perception is that it is a personal attack.

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Commissioner MacNeill stated the Village lost \$1 million in tax revenue due to NJ Transit. This was a cost savings attempt – not to take it personally.

Lt. Hippe stated the reduction in stipend and lack of notification are the issues.

Superintendent Monroe stated the DPW is upset and are talking about opting back in.

Clerk O’Grady stated she hasn’t taken the health benefits in over 10 years and would like to be considered to receive the stipend for opting out and was told no.

Mayor Anlian stated the Board of Commissioners will table the resolution and decide whether to adopt it for 2022.

Motion by Mayor Anlian, seconded by Commissioner Gerken, to table Resolution 2021-124.

On roll call, Commissioners Gerken, MacNeill, Olson, Portorreal and Mayor Anlian voted “YEA”.

HEARING OF CITIZENS

No citizens present.

REPORTS

Commissioner Portorreal stated she has information regarding the parks project she would like the Commissioners to review and discuss at the December 23rd Caucus.

Commissioner Olson stated 8 business owners attended his meeting yesterday. Parking seems to be the #1 issue. He would like the business owners to have an organization. The public art element of the Master Plan calls for an arts district – would like to pay musicians to play on street corners – Lt. Hippe concerned about security aspect.

Application for charging stations will be submitted on Monday. We should make the Village Electric Vehicle friendly and allow stations in all zones.

Langshultz Electric is working with PSE&G for lights and a camera for the Nature Preserve.

Comm. Olson stated he may have a free baby grand piano for the Civic Center. The Village would have to pay for moving and tuning. His thought was for the 3rd floor in Civic Center. Other Commissions think the nutrition floor would be better – seniors would enjoy it more than the kids.

Comm. Olson stated the items listed below were mentioned to the DEP as an enticement regarding the CSO plan.

- Propose to fill in the DPW ditch for CSO tanks
- Fricke’s property possible location for CSO tank
- Raise water level 6 inches at the Nature Preserve
- Storm water utility fees

Commissioner MacNeill stated the Village needs to go after the NJ Infrastructure money. The Village needs to hire a grant writer.

Superintendent Monroe advised Highland Place and Poplar Street have been paved. Central and Industrial Avenues will be paved in the spring.

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He would like a resolution prepared for Tuesday's meeting to purchase a tractor under the Sourcewell Co-Op.

Billow is still working on the Municipal Building roof specs and design.

Attorney Boggia stated a letter to PC Promotions was drafted regarding the Business Association. Commissioner Olson advised businesses had said they did not benefit from the street fair. There is no point in having the street fair if our businesses are not benefiting. Mr. Boggia stated a consultant for the Fire Department study was recommended by Linda Murphy (DPW Consultant).

Mayor Anlian will send the Mayor's Monarch Pledge to Steve Quinn.

DISCUSSION

2022 Salary Ordinance

The Board of Commissioners will review the numbers of their respective departments and get back to the Village Clerk with any changes.

Community Development Block Grant Application

Community Development possible projects:

- Raising catch basin on Birch Street
- Paving of Grove Street, Summit Street
- Chestnut Street Park – rejuvenate grounds
- Hunter Park – resurfacing tennis court

Superintendent Monroe will reach out to Mike Kelly, Boswell Engineering.

Annual Resolutions

The Commissioners reviewed the list of resolutions. Mayor Anlian advised a resolution needs to be added appointing Judge Quirico to a 4-year term.

CLOSED SESSION

Resolution:

2021-125 Authorize Closed Session Meeting

On a motion by Mayor Anlian, seconded by Commissioner Gerken, the public portion of the meeting recessed in order to convene a Closed Session Executive Meeting permitted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b (8) Litigation

On roll call, Commissioners Gerken, MacNeill, Olson, Portorreal and Mayor Anlian voted "YEA".

The Board of Commissioners convened closed session at 9:40 p.m.

On a motion by Mayor Anlian, seconded by Commissioner Gerken, the Board of Commissioners returned to open session at 9:51 p.m.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Anlian, seconded by Commissioner Portorreal to adjourn.

On roll call, Commissioners Gerken, MacNeill, Olson, Portorreal and Mayor Anlian voted “YEA”.

Commissioner MacNeill adjourned the meeting at 9:51 p.m.

/s/William G. Gerken
Commissioner

Absent
Commissioner MacNeill

Absent
Commissioner Olson

/s/ Wanda C. Portorreal
Commissioner

/s/ John H. Anlian
Mayor

/s/Tara O’Grady
Approved on February 17, 2022