

**COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**RIDGEFIELD PARK**  
**November 9, 2021**  
**7:30 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 Village Website.

**ROLL CALL**

Those present were Commissioners Gerken, MacNeill, Olson, Portorreal and Mayor Anlian in the chair.

Also, present: Priscilla Boggia, Village Attorney; Joe Rella, Chief of Police and Tara O’Grady, Village Clerk

**FLAG SALUTE**

The flag salute was led by Mayor Anlian.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Motion by Commissioner MacNeill, seconded by Commissioner Gerken to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$4,645,083.72.

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

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Gerken stated there is progress with the Nature Preserve. The tree carving came out fantastic.

Commissioner Olson stated the tree sculpture at the Nature Preserve is finished. Work is being done on the gazebo in McGowan Park. He is sending all Village business owners a letter inviting them to attend a meeting to revive the Business Association.

Mayor Anlian advised the Veterans Day Observation is Thursday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> at the monument on Euclid Avenue at 11am. All residents should take the opportunity to attend.

**HEARING OF CITIZENS**

Dan Gallagher, resident, stated Birch Street has a sewer/flooding issue. The DPW was called and nothing has been done when he was told it would be looked into. The flooding is getting worse and he is concerned icing will start soon.

Commissioner Olson advised he will contact the DPW Superintendent and get back to him tomorrow on this issue.

John Duddy, resident, also advised on the Birch Street flooding issue. He stated the catch basin is not level and there is always residual water, sometimes 14 inches deep. He advised the collar needs to be raised and this will alleviate the issue.

Ms. Aisha, resident, spoke to the property manager who stated the Village Engineer would look into it but hasn’t heard anything.

Mayor Anlian advised the Village will look into it.

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Noel Cote, resident, inquired about Resolution 2021-104 – Nature Preserve sculpture. He inquired where, in the budget, the funds came from, where other quotes obtained since the cost was \$22,000 plus room and board.

Commissioner Olson advised Greg Napolitan was the preferred vendor. Other quotes were received – one vendor stepped out and another couldn't do it in the time frame.

Mayor Anlian advised after November 1<sup>st</sup>; funds can be transferred from on line item in the budget to another – not sure what budget line was used to pay for the carving.

Mr. Cote stated Main Street is a mess on the weekends. The businesses put out their garbage on Saturdays for Monday pick-up. The landlords should be notified that this is not permitted.

Joan Carlson, resident, added that the garbage complaint was made 6 months ago.

Mayor Anlian stated people are negligent. Commissioner Olson stated the recycling section of the Main Street garbage receptacles will be removed to help alleviate the problem.

Ms. Carlson stated she noticed a few new pieces of art in Fellowship Park and would like to know who paid for them and if the Arts Association covered the DPW overtime for their arts event.

Commissioner Olson advised the art was free – on loan and the Village covered the DPW overtime. Mayor Anlian added the DPW is utilized for all community events. These events make Ridgefield Park a more enjoyable place to live.

Ms. Carlson stated the Senior Citizens in the Village need help. The Village doesn't have a bank anymore and the seniors can't get around. Any thoughts to a town bus to transport the Seniors to the bank, Shop Rite, etc.

Mayor Anlian stated branches are no longer profitable to banks. Seniors can use NJ Transit since it goes through town.

Tom Christiansen, resident, also added that something needs to be done about the garbage.

Scott Toledo, Elizabeth Knapp, residents inquired if the Village is planning to fix or repair the Little League field. Mr. Toledo hopes artificial turf would be a possibility.

Commissioner Portorreal stated she received a letter and the Commissioners will review it at their next meeting – would probably have to go out to bid. She added there is a bigger project in the pipelines.

Mayor Anlian added the Board of Commissioners are considering a large rehabilitation project of Veterans Park that would be done over several years with a cost of \$15 million.

Commissioner Gerken stated when his sons played Little League, the volunteers of the baseball organization worked on the field.

Erica Duddy, resident, inquired if anything is being done about children popping wheelies on their bikes in front of vehicles. This is a very serious and dangerous situation.

Chief Rella stated the Police Department is aware of it. Unfortunately, the Governor has tied their hands. Chief Rella stated it is a challenging problem.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mayor Anlian announces that the following business is considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted in one motion. Any item may be removed for separate consideration.

### **RESOLUTIONS:**

2021-119 Approve Village Personnel Policies and Procedures Employee Handbook

2021-120 Authorize Refund of Tax Payment Interest

2021-121 Authorize the Policy of Ridgefield Park Volunteer Fire Department Stipends and Reimbursements

2021-122 Authorize Professional Services Contract with LKM Consulting, LLC for a DPW Shared Services Investigation Study

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Motion by Commissioner Portorreal, seconded by Commissioner Olson, that the consent agenda be approved.

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

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Veterans Park Project**

Charles Florio, Maria Florio, Juan Vasquez, Ashley Florio, Ricardo Martinez, Jennifer Florio-Martinez, Matthew Florio and Michael Raimondi were in attendance to discuss the Veterans Park Project.

Charles Florio stated his family is from Ridgely Park and have 25 children. His family would like to make a substantial donation to the project.

Commissioner MacNeill advised the Village has constraints on bonding. The Village has an upcoming hefty expense with its CSOs – the DEP and EPA want overflow captured. The Village has already spent approximately \$5 million on planning. The Federal government is watching us. The other pressure is the loss of the Skymark project. NJ Transit took that property and the Village is losing \$1 million a year in taxes. Our financial advisors recommend bonding \$4 million in 2022, \$2 million in 2023, and possibly \$4 million in 2024. This is a \$15 million project. Ridgely Park has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest tax rate in Bergen County.

Mayor Anlian added that everything can’t be done at once. The Village has limits on borrowing. The thought is to renovate the park in stages and to start with the football field.

Charles Florio stated he will hire a consultant to help get extra funding. His family would like to donate \$1 million towards the football field. He has connections with the State and County and will reach out to them.

Mayor Anlian asked Commissioner Portorreal to email the project to Mr. Florio. Mayor Anlian thanked the Florio’s for their interest and to let the Village know when their consultant comes in.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

2021-123 Authorize Closed Session Meeting

On a motion by Commissioner Gerken, seconded by Commissioner Olson, 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) Personnel

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

The Board of Commissioners convened closed session at 9:00 p.m.

On a motion by Commissioner Gerken, seconded by Commissioner Olson, the Board of Commissioners returned to open session at 9:30 p.m.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Gerken, seconded by Commissioner Olson to adjourn.

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

Mayor Anlian adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

/s/William G. Gerken  
Commissioner

Absent  
Commissioner MacNeill

/s/Mark C. Olson  
Commissioner

/s/ Wanda C. Portorreal  
Commissioner

/s/ John H. Anlian  
Mayor

/s/Tara O’Grady  
Village Clerk

Approved on February 8, 2022