

COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
RIDGEFIELD PARK
May 13, 2025
7:30 PM

Mayor MacNeill announces 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 31, 2024 and was posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board and the Village Website.

This agenda is listed as a courtesy and attempt to inform the public of actions being considered by the Village Board of Commissioners. There may be additions and deletions prior to the Board taking final action. Any action may be taken at any meeting, which includes all Caucus and Regular sessions. The Commissioners reserve the right to conduct and/or attend any meetings presently scheduled for the rest of 2025 by a combination of electronic and/or in-person means. Meetings are open to the public.

ROLL CALL

FLAG SALUTE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioners Regular Meeting of April 22, 2025

PAYMENT OF BILLS

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

HEARING OF CITIZENS

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor MacNeill 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:

2025-51 Calling for the Restoration of Energy Taxes to Municipalities
2025-52 Designate 2025 Summer ArtsFest as a Block Party

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

2025-09 ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)
CALENDAR YEAR 2025

CLOSED SESSION (if necessary)

2025-53 Authorize Closed Session Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION 2025-51

Resolution Calling for the Restoration of Energy Taxes to Municipalities

WHEREAS, taxes on gas and electric utilities were originally collected by the host municipalities to be used for local purposes and to compensate the public for the use of their rights of way; and

WHEREAS, when the State made itself the collection agent for these taxes, it promised to dedicate the proceeds to municipal property tax relief; since, just as municipalities collect property taxes for the benefit of school districts, counties and other entities; the State is supposed to collect Energy Taxes for the benefit of municipal governments; and

WHEREAS, for years State budget makers have diverted funding from Energy Taxes to fund State programs; and instead of being spent on local programs and services and used to offset property taxes, the money has been spent as successive Legislatures and Administrations have seen fit; and

WHEREAS, while the State may need to have the right to override the statutory dedication of these revenues to local governments, in order to deal with emergencies and crises that may occur; current State policymakers should not exercise that right automatically; and

WHEREAS, while that right should be the exception, it has become the rule; and

WHEREAS, by keeping flat funding of the appropriation for CMPTRA year-over-year, State Budget makers have been able to continue collecting Energy Taxes, while keeping additional revenue that should have been returned to provide property tax relief; and

WHEREAS, in SFY 2023, the State did provide some much-needed relief in the allocation of \$75 million of new funds identified as the Municipal Relief Fund; and

WHEREAS, in SFY 2024, the State allocated \$150 million in Municipal Relief Funds, however, in SFY 2025 and, as proposed in SFY 2026, no allocation will exist; and

WHEREAS, in SFY 2024 the Energy Tax Receipts Program should have received over \$350 million to restore municipalities back to 2008 levels, however, the State's diversion of Energy Taxes has continued to grow causing more of a financial gap; and

WHEREAS, the cumulative impact of years of flat funding and underfunding has left many municipalities with serious needs and burdensome property taxes; and

WHEREAS, local elected officials are in the best position to decide the best use of these resources, which were always intended to fund local programs and services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village of Ridgefield Park, in the county of Bergen calls for the immediate restoration of funding diverted from Energy Taxes intended for local use; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we, respectfully, call on State policy makers to end the diversion of our municipal resources to cover State spending and to provide us with this important tool to relieve the worst-in-the-nation property tax burden borne, for too long, by the people of New Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution is forwarded to Assemblymembers Shama A. Haider and Ellen J. Park, Senator Gordon M. Johnson, the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs Jacquelyn Suárez, the State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio, the Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way, the Governor of the State of New Jersey Phil Murphy, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

RESOLUTION 2025-52

WHEREAS, the Village of Ridgefield Park will be hosting its annual Summer Arts Fest on Saturday, June 7, 2025 (with a rain date of Sunday June 8) from 4:00 PM until 9:00 PM; and

WHEREAS, the Village would like to permit the limited consumption of alcoholic beverages at this event; and

WHEREAS, Section 113-20 of the Village Code prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages on public streets in the Central Business Historic District except as otherwise provided for in Section 113-21, which does permit the consumption of alcoholic beverages for “block party” events approved by the Village; and

WHEREAS, the Village has decided to designate the annual Summer Arts Fest as a “block party” event in order to permit the consumption of alcoholic beverages by attendees, within the time and location of the event; and

WHEREAS, the Chief of Police has no objection to the designation of this year’s annual Summer Arts Fest as a “block party” event; and

WHEREAS, this authorization for alcohol consumption during the above event is limited, and would prohibit sale of alcohol on the street, as well as limiting distribution of alcoholic beverages to only those businesses regularly authorized to sell alcohol in the area near the event; and

WHEREAS, the alcohol consumed on public streets must be purchased from inside one of the businesses described above and only during this event may individuals consume alcohol while on a public street within the Central Business Historic District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Village of Ridgefield Park designates the 2025 Summer Arts Fest as a “block party” event, to be held on Saturday June 7, 2025 (with a rain date of Sunday, June 8) between the hours of 4:00 PM and 9:00 PM, subject to the terms and conditions set forth above.

ORDINANCE 2025-09
VILLAGE OF RIDGEFIELD PARK

CALENDAR YEAR 2025

**ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS
AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK
(N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14)**

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget to 2.50% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.16a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of the Village of Ridgefield Park in the County of Bergen finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2025 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the Village Commissioners hereby determines that a 1% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to \$211,014.31 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and,

WHEREAS the Village Commissioner's hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Commissioners of the Village of Ridgefield Park, in the County of Bergen, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2025 budget year, the final appropriations of the Village of Ridgefield Park shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 3.50%, amounting to \$738,550.87, and that the CY 2025 municipal budget for the Village of Ridgefield Park be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and,

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.