

**COMMISSIONERS CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES
RIDGEFIELD PARK
January 9, 2025
7:00 PM**

Mayor MacNeill 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 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

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

Also, present: Chris Chapman, Village Attorney; Joe Rella, Chief of Police; Rich Flynn, DPW Asst. Superintendent (7:14 PM) and Tara O’Grady, Village Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Gerken, seconded by Commissioner Portorreal to approve the minutes of the Commissioners Caucus and Closed Session Meetings of December 19, 2024.

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

DISCUSSION

Tax Appeal Settlement – 115 Laurel Street

Resolution to be prepared for the January 14, 2025 Meeting Agenda.

Tax Appeal Settlement – 283 Main Street

Resolution to be prepared for the January 14, 2025 Meeting Agenda.

Laura Surenian – Administrative Office of the Courts directives regarding the New Fair Housing Act – tabled to next meeting.

2025 Salary Ordinance

Ordinance will be introduced at the January 14, 2025 meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

12-16 Local Finance Notice 2024-20 - Informational

12-17 Local Finance Notice 2024-21 – Informational

12-18 Jack Hofmann, DEP – Ridgefield Park Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance – Chris Chapman will discuss with Mike Landolfi

12-19 Hackensack Riverkeeper – Thank you - Informational

12-20 NJLM Weekly Roundup - Informational

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CORRESPONDENCE – cont.

12-21 NJDEP Weekly Update - Informational

12-22 Derek Sands, County of Bergen – Hannukah and Kwanzaa Celebrations - Informational

01-01 NJDEP Weekly Update - Informational

01-02 NJ Department of Community Affairs – 2024 Financial Disclosure Enforcement Notice - Informational

01-03 NJLM Daily Update - Informational

01-04 NJLM Weekly Roundup - Informational

01-05 NJDEP Weekly Update – Informational

01-06 Bergen County Board of Commissioners – 2025 Commissioner Meeting Calendar, Podcast/Resolutions/Ordinances - Informational

HEARING OF CITIZENS

No citizens present.

REPORTS

Commissioner Gerken advised 8 applications for the Municipal Court Judge position have been received and are now under review. He will get the number down to 3 and set up interviews. Comm. Gerken attended an Environmental Commission meeting and the Veterans Park project was brought up – all of the members of the Environmental Commissioner are in favor of grass fields.

There will be a kick-off meeting tomorrow on the new website design.

Comm. Gerken will sit down with Mike Liantonio to find out what grants we have and how much money is left in the Legislative Grant that was received.

Need to determine the next phase of the CSO project after Phase 1.

Commissioner Portorreal advised she spoke to Matt McArow and reminded the Commissioners about the MEL class. The Village will receive \$250 credit per Commissioner that takes the webinar.

The first meeting of the pool is January 13th. The pool has been in the red for years. Last year the salary line of the budget was \$78,000 but spent \$112,000. Would like this increased to \$120,000.

Operating expenses were \$52,000 but spent \$66,000. Would like this increased to \$85,000. A repairs line is to be added to the 2025 budget. Repairs to the main pool that need to be done cost \$130,000. The game plan is to increase memberships. Some municipal pools that are successful are the ones with swim teams. Comm. Portorreal will reach out to Leonia and Secaucus.

Mayor MacNeill asked if leasing the pool would be an option. Vince Buono knows someone who would lease the pool – then it is someone else's problem.

The Ambulance Corps. will be attending the January 23rd Caucus. Chelsea Nagurka stepped down and Sylvio Zapata stepped in. 10-12 radios will be needed for the Ambulance Corps.

Commissioner Mirza asked Commissioner Gerken if there is an update on the Geotech survey for Fellowship Park. Comm. Gerken stated there is no update.

The Ridgefield Park Arts Association will be hosting the Summer ArtsFest on June 14 at Main St/ Grove St. Main Street will be closed. Show Mobile from the County will be rented.

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Sweet Meg would like to hold a concert on April 23rd.

Comm. Mirza will be meeting with Lisette on the summer concert schedule.

Comm. Mirza received the street fair contract from JC Promotions.

The Rescue Squad installation of officers will be January 14th.

Comm. Mirza is meeting with the McGowan Park community gardeners on Saturday morning.

There was a preliminary meeting with Boswell Engineering on the Birch Street flooding issue – there are no solutions as of yet and Joe Dunn will research the lines in the area.

Comm. Mirza had a meeting with Civic Plus on digitalizing the recreation and fields permitting process. This will save time and energy and will increase registrations.

There is an issue with ParkMobile – the fee will be changed to \$.50 for an hour.

Chief Rella stated the meter heads need to be replaced and will get a quote.

Comm. Mirza advised he received an email from George Cooke. He is rescinding his offer to donate sculptures for the Frank White Park.

Clerk O’Grady advised Dan Dabrowski from the Mid Bergen Health Commission was in and asking about the Mid Bergen Health Commission and HARP contracts.

Ms. O’Grady advised she received a call from the Little Ferry Borough Administrator regarding the sound system at their football field. Little Ferry would like Ridgefield Park to contribute to the replacement cost since our children play on their field. Comm. Mirza asked Clerk O’Grady to give his contact information to Little Ferry’s Borough Administrator.

A resolution of support will need to be adopted by the Board of Commissioners to accompany the response letter to the Department of Transportation regarding the Rte.80 ramp and Second Street intersection.

Asst. Superintendent Flynn inquired if the “house” and “piping” in Fellowship Park can be removed. Also, the art pieces in this park have never been picked up by the owners – he will reach out to Giselle.

Regarding the St. Francis Community Garden, there is new leadership in the church. As per Rich LaTour, members are allowed to grow vegetables in the garden but not permitted to donate the produce to the food pantry.

Mayor MacNeill advised the Commissioners to get their budget numbers in. Chief Rella advised he hasn’t heard from Bilow regarding the construction of the dispatch center.

Mayor MacNeill advised he is meeting with a company that wants to purchase the NJ Transit property.

Mayor MacNeill is waiting on a preliminary site design from Suburban on the IGA lot.

Mayor MacNeill would like to add a bike lane on Emerson Street and also on Challenger Road. He would like to approach KABR since a big sell on the new development is the proximity to the County Park.

The NJ DMV is offering to bring their Mobile Registration Unit to Ridgefield Park. The location that would be utilized is the Webster Street parking lot. The date the Commissioners would prefer is March 21st.

Chris Chapman advised the MKW contract has been signed.

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CLOSED SESSION

Resolution:

2025-01 Authorize Closed Session Meeting

On a motion by Commissioner Gerken, seconded by Commissioner Mirza, 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 (9) Personnel

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

The Board of Commissioners convened closed session at 8:44 p.m.

On a motion by Commissioner Gerken, seconded by Commissioner Mirza, the Board of Commissioners returned to open session at 8:56 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Mirza, seconded by Commissioner Anlian to adjourn.

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

Mayor MacNeill adjourned the meeting at 8:56 p.m.

Absent
Commissioner Anlian

/s/ William G. Gerken
Commissioner

Absent
Commissioner Mirza

/s/ Wanda C. Portorreal
Commissioner

/s/ Adam MacNeill
Mayor

/s/Tara O’Grady

Village Clerk

Approved on January 23, 2025