

COMMISSIONERS CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES

RIDGEFIELD PARK

February 6, 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

Also, present: Philip Boggia, Chris Chapman, Village Attorney; Rich Flynn, DPW Asst. Superintendent 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 Meeting of January 23, 2025.

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

Abstain: Commissioner Mirza

DISCUSSION

Ridgefield Park Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

Silvio Zapata was in attendance to answer any questions the Board of Commissioners may have regarding to his proposal.

Mr. Zapata realizes there is concern over his initial projections. He advised there are significantly less volunteers now due to the waiting period to become active.

Mayor MacNeill stated they have to go under the assumption that this will be a fully paid service. There is not enough volume in the Village to break even.

Mr. Zapata stated the previous Commissioner cut the Ambulance Corps. budget in half.

It will take 2 weeks to have the Corps. up and running, although it may not be full-time. Complete coverage will take approximate 6 weeks.

Mayor MacNeill stated according to the proposal, there would be 3 management positions. The Village cannot absorb that – something in the budget would have to get cut.

Commissioner Mirza suggested contracting with a hospital. Mr. Zapata stated the wait time for an ambulance could be up to 15 minutes and hospitals lowered their employment standards.

Mr. Zapata stated the Village has between 900-1200 calls per year. It is anticipated that 70-80% of the residents have insurance. Anticipated revenue would be approximately \$300,000, while the cost of the services would be \$650,000. Total cost to the Village - \$350,000. It would take the State 3-6 months for billing approval.

Mayor MacNeill advised meeting with the CFO and Bob Benecke to discuss funding.

Commissioner Portorreal stated she will meet with the CFO and contact Bound Brook again.

Mayor MacNeill stated he will call Bound Brook tomorrow.

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Village Website Redesign

Michelle DeLuca was in attendance to discuss the website design.

Commissioner Gerken advised the most important part of the design is for it to be user friendly. We should have a preliminary design by the end of February.

Ms. DeLuca stated the biggest hurdle will be to getting updated information.

Asst. Superintendent Flynn suggested an alert bulletin board for important messages.

Ms. DeLuca suggested to the Board of Commissioners to review the websites of New Providence, NJ and Hastings on Hudson, NY.

CORRESPONDENCE

01-20 NJLM Weekly Roundup - Informational

01-21 2025 Funding Round for all Open Space Trust Grants – Commissioners discussed acquiring 131 Bergen Turnpike.

01-22 NJDEP Weekly Update - Informational

01-23 Department of Environmental Protection – NJ National Flood Insurance Program training - Informational

01-24 NJLM Daily Update - Informational

01-25 Derek Sands, County of Bergen – Lunar New Year - Informational

01-26 Derek Sands, County of Bergen – Black History Month - Informational

02-01 NJLM Weekly Roundup - Informational

02-02 NJDEP Weekly Update - Informational

02-03 County Executive State of the County Address - Informational

02-04 Terry Rodriguez – Scouts Presidential Volunteer Service Award – Clerk O’Grady will provide meeting dates to Ms. Rodriguez.

HEARING OF CITIZENS

No citizens present.

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING & ADOPTION

2025-02 ORDINANCE OF THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEFIELD PARK ADOPTING A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR MOUNT VERNON STREET AREA IN THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEFIELD PARK

The clerk presented affidavit of publication, showing that advertisement had been made according to law, which was ordered filed. Commissioner Gerken moved a public hearing be held on the ordinance and was seconded by Commissioner Mirza. So ordered. Commissioner Gerken read the ordinance by title on second reading. Commissioner Gerken then announced that all interested parties would now be given opportunity to be heard for or against the adoption of the ordinance.

There were no comments from the public.

Commissioner Gerken moved the ordinance be adopted on second reading and final passage, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Mirza and adopted upon a call of the roll.

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

REPORTS

Commissioner Gerken advised he attended the CSO Phase 1 Pre-Construction meeting. The project will start within the next few weeks.

Boswell Engineering’s status report was received today.

The Geo Survey for Fellowship Park cannot be located – Boswell’s proposal is \$3300.00

The DPW will be conducting some of the demo work at Fellowship Park to save money.

Webster Parking Lot lighting may be an issue due to the size and design.

Commissioner Portorreal advised she met with Ashley from Millenium who is checking for outdoor space grants for the pool.

The 1st proposal was submitted to the DPW negotiating team.

The pool opening quotes are coming in high.

Commissioner Portorreal met with Sustainable RP – they want to maintain silver status.

The 10th Annual Hackensack Race is September 27th.

Commissioner Mirza advised the swing is done at Hunter Park.

The quote for the permit software was received – 1st year cost is \$13,000.00. 2nd year - \$9,500.00 Add-ons - \$3500 for document management and \$2500 for accessibility. The Commissioners stated no to include the add-ons.

The Little League is looking for improvements – clay.

The recycling cans are in for the recycling initiative.

The Library’s Historical Room is in disarray and looking for assistance.

Commissioner Mirza suggested a “State of the Village” address be given for the residents.

Commissioner Mirza advised he is bringing on an intern.

The Street Fair is scheduled for Oct. 4th – there will be no stages.

The Arts Festival is scheduled for June 7th.

Earth Day is scheduled for June 14th.

Commissioner Mirza asked for an update on the Commissioner’s pictures for the Municipal Bldg.

Commissioner Mirza suggested folding the Rescue Squad into the Ambulance Corps. or the Fire Department. Asst. Superintendent Flynn stated all of the emergency services provide completely separate services and suggested he speak with FD Chief Lynn.

Mayor MacNeill stated he received a resignation from the Building Department. An experienced person will be needed.

The Chamber of Commerce is putting together a “welcome package” glossy for new residents and businesses. One side will be the Chamber information and the other Municipal information.

Clerk O’Grady advised Congressman Gottheimer’s “Mobile Office” will be coming on March 25th.

The Teterboro Aircraft Noise Abatement Advisory Committee is asking for an alternate member. Commissioner Mirza suggested his brother, Zamin Mirza.

Mrs. O’Grady advised the County is sending emails regarding the Open Space Grant for the purchase of additional property for the Nature Preserve – Commissioner Anlian will contact the property owner again and will handle any paperwork.

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Clerk O'Grady stated the Library called concerned about parking on Wednesday and that the Municipal Building staff will be attending Steve Fernandez's funeral on Wednesday – the Commissioners stated the buildings will have a delayed opening – 12:30pm.

Asst. Superintendent Flynn stated there may be some issues with recycling collection on Wednesday but will get it done.

DPW workers will be assigned if it snows on Wednesday to assist with shoveling.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

Mayor MacNeill adjourned the meeting at 9:41 p.m.

/s/ John H. Anlian
Commissioner

/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 February 20, 2025