

BOROUGH OF RAMSEY
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 22, 2023
7:00pm

This meeting is also being conducted telephonically. The Dial-In Number (425)436-6365 Access Code 213563#. The meeting may also be viewed on Ramsey YouTube Channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeBnVXBwSn_ILMuAGkSin9w

Mayor Dillon called the meeting to order at 7:02pm, asked Chief Lyman to lead the flag salute and read the Open Public Meetings Act notice.

I. ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Dillon, Councilpersons Cusick, Kilman, Gutwetter, Poppe and Woods

Also Present: Borough Clerk Bendian, Borough Administrator Vozeh and Borough Attorney Scandariato

Absent: Councilman Popolo

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – WS 02-08-23

Motion to file the minutes by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilwoman Cusick. All in favor. Carried.

III. COMMUNICATIONS -

Motion to receive and file the communications as listed on the agenda by Councilman Kilman, seconded by Councilwoman Cusick. All in favor. Carried

1. Warren Staudinger, Division Director, County of Bergen Mosquito Control, 220 E Ridgewood Avenue, Paramus, NJ
letter dated February 16, 2023, requesting permission to perform the annual aerial spraying for mosquito larvae in the borough

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone wishing to address the governing body please give your name (spelling the last name) and address. Please speak in an audible tone and address your comments to the Chair. There will be a five-minute time limit per speaker, unless reduced because of the volume of business on the agenda. Please note, public comment is your time. Out of respect and fairness to all, there will be no interruptions or questions answered during your time. No time shall be ceded to anyone else and no time shall be saved for later use. Any responses may be given during the governing body's comments later in the meeting, or as directed by the Chair. The Borough Clerk is the official time keeper.

Mayor Dillon opened public comment, with no one in council chambers or on the telephone wishing to be heard, Mayor Dillon closed public comment.

Mayor Dillon asked for a motion to go out of the regular order of business to move to Special Presentations. Motion by Councilman Kilman, seconded by Councilwoman Poppe.

Roll Call:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Kilman, Poppe, Woods

Mayor Dillon administered the oaths of office to those present.

Each officer was then pinned by a family member and Chief Lyman made a few comments.

Lieutenant Earle “Casey” Hines, Ramsey Police Department

Sergeant Michael Canonico, Ramsey Police Department

Police Officer Ruben Gonzalez, Ramsey Police Department

Police Officer Zachary O’Connor, Ramsey Police Department

Mayor Dillon then asked for a motion to return to the regular order of business. Motion by Councilman Kilman, seconded by Councilwoman Poppe.

Roll Call:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Kilman, Poppe, Woods

V. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES - None

VI. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Dillon made the following appointment:

Gary Bach, Recreation Commission, Alternate One

Mayor Dillon asked for a motion to go out of order of regular business in order to hear Administrator Vozech’s report. Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Woods.

Administrator Vozech -

Resolutions 60 – Awarding contract to Suburban Disposal for solid waste collection: Borough last entered into a solid waste collection contract in 2018 which expires this spring. The contract was publicly advertised and Suburban was the low bid. Bid submission was

reviewed and found to be compliant from both a technical and legal perspective by Borough's Qualified Purchasing Agent and Borough Attorney respectively. Resolution awards contract to Suburban Disposal. Given the length and value of the contract, I will have additional background comments after resolution 61.

Resolution 61 - Awarding contract to Suburban Disposal for recyclable material collection: Borough last entered into a recyclable materials collection contract in 2018 which expires this spring. The contract was publicly advertised and Suburban was the low bid. Bid submission was reviewed and found to be compliant from both a technical and legal perspective by Borough's Qualified Purchasing Agent and Borough Attorney respectively. Resolution awards contract to Suburban Disposal.

Garbage & Recycling Contract Factors and Some of Options Reviewed

Bid Options - In the last three contracts (2013, 2018 & 2023) Borough has requested a bid option for use of natural gas powered trucks for collection instead of diesel fuel powered. Each contract this has been the option selected by the Borough at no additional cost, providing a cleaner fueled vehicle.

In the last three contracts (2013, 2018 & 2023) Borough has requested bid option for once weekly garbage pickup in the winter months and returning to a twice weekly garbage pickup for the rest of the year. This option during all three bid cycles has not provided any tangible savings. Obviously, the overall volume of trash will remain the same just condensed to one pickup. The contractor feels that there is not enough variable cost savings in the eliminated pick up day to substantially offset the increased time, additional trips to landfill, and heavier loads for their workers on the single pickup day.

In the 2023 bid, Borough in addition to the base bid using our traditional pick-up also added an option to price garbage pickup by "one arm bandit" automated trucks. Borough would under this scenario provide each resident with a new larger container compatible with the automated collection truck. We chose to include this option for pricing consideration, as it is starting to be seen in a few municipalities. We wanted to fully review and evaluate the viability of any potential avenues to keep contract costs as low as we could, without impacting service. We received no bid for this option.

Other Northwest Bergen Towns Collection Costs

We reviewed and analyzed the 13 Northwest Bergen Municipalities' garbage collection costs. Utilizing the municipal budgets of each town for garbage collection cost and then taking the total number of residences in each town from the information included in the County of Bergen Tax Abstracts provides an annual cost per residence for garbage collection. For Ramsey in 2022 that number was about \$125 annually per house for garbage to be collected and hauled away to a landfill 104 times per year or \$1.20 per pickup. That value was the third lowest of the 13 towns. Using Ramsey's updated numbers for 2023, the annual cost will increase to \$236 or \$2.27 per pickup. This per residence cost would still rank 5th lowest of the 13 towns using Ramsey's 2023 costs and other town's 2022 costs.

Another option we did some preliminary analysis on, is reviewing the economics of the municipality adding staff and infrastructure to do its own garbage collection. In doing this

we reviewed the budget requirements of the 2 towns in Northwest Bergen that perform this service (Glen Rock and Ridgewood). In both cases in 2022 in employee salary and wages alone, these towns spent more on a per residence basis than Ramsey did for its collection by Suburban. That does not include those towns other additional costs for, purchase of garbage trucks (3 or 4), health care and other employee costs as well as increased insurance for worker's compensation. Even with Ramsey's increased cost in 2023, again comparing only to 2022 salary costs for self-pickup towns, Ramsey is lower than one of the towns and just under the other without factoring in all the other previously mentioned applicable costs.

An additional note, some towns offer residents an option to contract directly with a third party for garbage pickup. Teaneck is one of the towns, that private pickup service option currently costs \$25 a month or \$300 per house. Again, this pricing exceeds both Ramsey's 2022 cost of \$125 and 2023 cost of \$236 under the Suburban contract.

Future Options

While our costs may be in line with or less than other communities for this service. The fact is, this cost increase under the 2023 contract is significant and has a large impact on the municipal tax rate. We fully understand this and we will continue to look at options and work collectively with neighboring towns. This is a frequent topic for both our Northwest Bergen Mayors and Administrators. To date, we have not found value or savings in collectively pursuing a multiple municipality self-pickup arrangement but we will continue to evaluate options and potential for any viable alternatives.

Mayor Dillon asked for a motion to return to the regular order of business.
Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Woods.

Roll Call:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Kilman, Poppe, Woods

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION

Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Poppe

BE IT RESOLVED that the following resolutions herewith listed having been considered by the governing body of the Borough of Ramsey be and are hereby passed and approved:

- | | | |
|----------|-------------|--|
| 054-2023 | Resolution: | payment of vouchers |
| 055-2023 | Resolution: | ratifying the actions of the governing body for payroll number four |
| 056-2023 | Resolution: | authorizing a tax refund for 2019 for Block 5302 Lot 32.14 in the amount of \$1,312.57 |
| 057-2023 | Resolution: | authorizing a tax refund for 2020-2022 Block 5503, Lot 42 in the amount of \$24,983.76 |
| 058-2023 | Resolution: | authorizing a tax redemption for Block 3303, Lot 23 in the amount of \$635.44 |
| 059-2023 | Resolution: | authorizing the borough enter into a contract for 9-1-1 Communication services with the County of Bergen for a term of five years at an annual rate of \$7,386.50 |
| 060-2023 | Resolution: | awarding a contract to Suburban Disposal for a five-year contract for the furnishing of solid waste collection and disposal in the amount of \$6,753,178 |
| 061-2023 | Resolution: | awarding a contract to Suburban Disposal for a five-year contract for the furnishing of recyclable material collection services in the amount of \$2,711,000 |
| 062-2023 | Resolution: | authorizing the borough enter into a grant agreement with the County of Bergen for the Finch Park Basketball Court Resurfacing and Painting Project in the amount of \$127,995 |
| 063-2023 | Resolution: | confirming the appointment of Andrea Diekmann Johe as Financial Specialist, effective March 13, 2023 |

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION (cont'd)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following applications and/or recommendations hereby be approved:

A. SPECIAL PERMITS:

Minetti Dennis is requesting permission to hold a townwide garage sale on Saturday, May 6, 2023 9am-4pm

Shannon Rose is requesting permission to use the MacFarren Field parking lot for employee parking March 16-March 20th for a special event which will include patio enclosure for temporary outdoor dining 11am-2am

B. BLOCK PARTY REQUESTS:

Mayor Dillon thanked Administrator Vozech for all of his work analyzing the garbage and recycling. Ramsey is not the only borough facing this dramatic increase as was discussed in the Northwest Bergen Mayor's Association meetings.

Roll Call:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Kilman, Poppe, Woods

VIII. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Lieutenant Earle "Casey" Hines, Ramsey Police Department

Sergeant Michael Canonico, Ramsey Police Department

Acting Sergeant Adam Szelag, Ramsey Police Department

Police Officer Ruben Gonzalez, Ramsey Police Department

Police Officer Zachary O'Connor, Ramsey Police Department

IX. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – Councilman Michael Gutwetter

Library Board – Discussed the many activities offered at the library, check the library website for more details. The library is in discussion for HVAC replacement, interior design and landscape redesign.

Recreation – Winter sports wrestling has concluded and Spring sports begin shortly. The Spring Egg Hunt is April 1st partnering with the fire department for the event.

Pool Commission – Membership rates have been approved. Check the Pool website for details, including early bird registration. A First Responders Night will be on July 21st and the annual Luau is planned for August 25th.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Councilman Peter Kilman

Congratulated Gary Bach on his appointment to the Recreation Commission as well as all of the Police Officers sworn in earlier, commenting on the lovely presentation.

Will report at the next meeting after all his boards and commissions meet.

C. BUILDING, PLANNING & ZONING – Councilwoman Jane Woods

Thanked Gary Bach for joining the Recreation Commission.

Offered a special congratulations to Lt. Hines, Sgt. Canonico, Acting Sgt. Szelag and Police Officers Gonzalez and O'Connor.

Zoning Board of Adjustment – Thanked the board for their thoughtful and thorough vetting of each application.

Ramsey Seniors – Seniors have been assisting the Recreation Commission, stuffing eggs for the Spring Egg Hunt.

Design Review Board- Two applications were approved at the last meeting. The next meeting is Tuesday February 28th. Over the next few weeks the board will work with the enforcement officer to start making recommendations.

Thanked Administrator Vozech for all of his work on his in depth analysis of the garbage and recycling.

- D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilwoman Judy Cusick
Congratulated Gary Bach on his appointment to the Recreation Commission.
Congratulated Lieutenant Hines, Sergeant Canonico, Acting Sergeant Szlag and
Officers Gonzalez and O’Connor and expressed how grateful she is for their service and
protection.

Planning Board – Thanked the volunteers for their service to the Borough. The next
meeting is March 7th.

Shade Tree Commission – Thanked the commission for their volunteer efforts. Reported
that Arbor Day is April 28th. There is information on the borough website regarding the
Shade Tree Commission. The next meeting is on March 16th.

Board of Public Works – The next meeting is February 27th.

Lead Service Line Replacement - The Board of Public Works continues planning
regarding the NJDEP’s Lead Service Line replacement legislation. This project requires
that all Lead Service Lines served by the water system be replaced by the year 2031.
There are many considerations for this project including paving schedules (both county
and the Borough), costs, and other projects in the Borough. There will be a need for new
ordinances and these have been discussed with the council committee members.

Thanked Deirdre for her attendance of Congressman Josh Gottheimer’s 2023 Grant
Summit which hosted federal agencies. She met with attendees to discuss federal grant
resources or other programs that may benefit our borough

- E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilwoman Sara Poppe
Congratulated the officers on their appointments and promotions as well as Gary Bach
on his appointment to the Recreation Commission.

Municipal Alliance will hold their next meeting on Monday, February 27th.

The Ramsey Journal is accepting submissions with a deadline of March 17th.

- F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilman Glen Popolo
In Councilman Popolo’s absence Councilwoman Woods provided his report.

RIFE- The event at Humdingers earlier this month was a success. Upcoming events will
be karaoke and a spring dance at the community center.

Environmental Commission – Beginning in March strategic seminars will be offered via
Zoom. Clean Up Day is set for April 22nd.

G. MAYOR DEIRDRE DILLON

Congratulated Lieutenant Hines, Sergeant Canonico, Acting Sergeant Szelag and Officers Gonzalez and O'Connor. Expressed how proud she is of the Police Department.

Congratulated Gary Bach on his appointment to the Recreation Commission.

Thanked Administrator Vozech for his analysis on the garbage and recycling.

Congratulated the Library on their successful Winterfest on February 11th with hundreds of people in attendance. Commented on how proud she is that the library has such a wonderful reputation for their programming due to Director Latham and his staff.

Reported on the Federal grant summit that she attended which was hosted by Congressman Gottheimer. It was a wealth of information and will be putting together a meeting with emergency service groups. There are a lot of opportunities out there.

H. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Bruce Vozech

Resolution 59 – Authorizes the borough to enter into shared service agreement with County of Bergen for 9-1-1 Communication Services: The borough currently receives 9-1-1 services through Northwest Dispatch Service out of Ridgewood. County of Bergen over the last few years has made significant investments into the infrastructure at its regional dispatch center in Mahwah. This center has some of the latest technology and advancements in the communication industry providing potential for enhanced service for the Borough. Chief Lyman has recommended the switchover.

Resolution 62 – Authorizes the borough to enter into grant agreement with County of Bergen for Finch Park Basketball Court Resurfacing. The borough received a grant from the Bergen County Open Space Fund program to resurface and repaint the Finch Park Basketball Courts. The grant is in the amount of \$127,995.

Resolution 63 – Confirming the appointment of Andrea Diekmann Johe as Financial Specialist: As discussed at prior meeting, Jackie Turner in our Finance Department is retiring at the end of March. The borough posted the position and conducted interviews with a number of candidates. Prospective candidates were interviewed by CFO Denise Bartalotta and Ms. Turner and then I interviewed the candidates subsequent to that. The collective recommendation was to offer the position to Ms. Johe. She has municipal experience, performed both accounts payable as well as payroll responsibilities and holds a tax collector certification. She is also in the initial stages of taking the courses needed to eventually take the test for CFO certification. She will start on March 13th in order to train with Ms. Turner.

H. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Bruce Vozeh

2023 Municipal Budget – Reiterating comments from the prior meeting. The preparation of the 2023 Municipal Budget began in the fall. The same inflationary pressures and rising costs we all face in our household budgets or business budgets are the same for the Borough. A prime example is the discussion of the garbage and recycling collection contracts we just had. In a public bid contract, prices have escalated in the last five years where we see our 2023 prices are 90% higher than those priced for 2022 back in 2018. This overall inflation in operating costs is hitting all towns and the State is making a one year only change to its budget requirements for 2023, understanding this is a unique economic year. As mentioned, these and other factors create challenges in developing a responsible budget while maintaining quality services for our residents. At the upcoming Mayor & Council meetings we will have more detailed discussions on the 2023 budget. A tentative schedule for the 2023 Municipal Budget is as follows:

- o March 8: Municipal Budget Presentation
- o March 22: Introduction of the 2023 Municipal Budget
- o April 26: Public Hearing and vote on adoption of Municipal Budget

I. BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Peter A. Scandariato, Esq.- No report

J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian - No report

X. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES – None

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XII. NEW BUSINESS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilman Kilman. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:43pm.