

BOROUGH OF RAMSEY  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
Wednesday, September 13, 2023  
7:00pm

This meeting is being conducted telephonically. The Dial-In Number (425)436-6365 Access Code 213563# and may also be viewed on the Ramsey YouTube Channel [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeBnVXBwSn\\_ILMuAGkSin9w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeBnVXBwSn_ILMuAGkSin9w)

Mayor Dillon called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and asked former Police Chief Gurney to lead the flag salute. Mayor Dillon read the Open Public Meetings Act notice.

I. ROLL CALL – FLAG SALUTE – OPEN PUBLIC MEETING LAW NOTICE

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

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

Absent: Councilman Kilman

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 08-09-23

Motion by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilman Gutwetter. Councilpersons Cusick and Popolo abstained. All in favor. Carried

III. COMMUNICATIONS -

Motion by Councilwoman Poppe, seconded by Councilman Popolo  
Mayor Dillon accepts Ms. Monaghan’s resignation, with regret. All in favor. Carried.

1. George Bumiller, 39 Lakeview Terrace, Ramsey  
letter received September 7, 2023 listing suggestion 13
2. Danielle Monaghan, Ramsey Board of Health  
letter received September 7, 2023, resigning effective Friday, September 22, 2023

#### 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.

Chris Botta, President, Ramsey Housing Inc., updated the governing body on the 13 N. Central Avenue project. Approval was received from the Zoning Board and Ramsey Housing is requesting a transfer of funds from the borough affordable housing trust fund for the project. They have also received a \$700,000 grant from Bergen County. In addition, they are looking for transfer of the property to Ramsey Housing Inc. This housing project is for adults with developmental disabilities who can live independently but may need a helping hand. They are hoping to break ground in the Fall with a completion date in eight to twelve months.

Mayor Dillon replied that she is excited for the project.

George Bumiller, 39 Lakeview Terrace, Ramsey (via telephone), regarding his communication including suggestions. Mayor Dillon replied that his suggestions are being reviewed.

With no one else wishing to be heard, Mayor Dillon closed public comment.

Mayor Dillon asked for a motion to go out of the regular order of business for appointments, consent agenda and special presentations.

Motion by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilwoman Cusick.

#### Roll Call:

Yay: Cusick, Gutwetter, Poppe, Popolo, Woods

Absent: Kilman

Mayor Dillon appointed those listed on the agenda.

The governing body passed the consent resolution.

Mayor Dillon welcomed everyone and explained that the Mayor and Council fully support the Ramsey Police Department and the department becomes part of the family. Ramsey is very selective and interviewing is a grueling process and everyone should be proud of these officers on their appointments and promotions.

Mayor Dillon swore-in the two new Sergeants, two new probationary police officers and introduced K-9 Jack.

Chief Lyman expressed his thanks to the governing body and the Public Safety Committee for their support and praised Sergeants McMackin and McWilliams on their deserved promotions.

Chief Lyman and Captain Cherven presented the honorable service and lifesaving award recipients.

Mayor Dillon asked for a motion to return to the regularly scheduled agenda.  
Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilman Popolo  
All in favor. Carried

V. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE 09-2023 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SECTION 7-12.1 OF CHAPTER 7 ENTITLED TRAFFIC AND SECTIONS 8-2.2 AND 8-3.2 OF CHAPTER 8, ENTITLED MUNICIPAL PARKING LOTS AND ON-STREET PARKING AREAS

Motion by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilwoman Cusick

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance the Code of the Borough of Ramsey, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey and Specifically Section 7-12.1 of Chapter 7 entitled Traffic and Section 8-2.2 and 8-3.2 of Chapter 8, entitled Municipal Parking Lots and On-Street Parking Areas, final reading by title and that said ordinance be adopted as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk be and she hereby is, directed to cause a copy of the title of said ordinance to be published in an official newspaper of the Borough in the manner provided by law together with notice of the date of introduction and adoption of said ordinance.

Councilwoman Woods explained that this relocates parking spaces in front of the police station so that residents can park closer to the entrance and the parking spots on the street will be used for police parking.

Mayor Dillon opened up the public hearing on Ordinance 09-2023.

With no one wishing to be heard in council chambers or on the telephone, Mayor Dillon closed the public hearing on Ordinance 09-2023.

Roll Call:

Yay: Cusick, Gutwetter, Popolo, Poppe, Woods

Absent: Kilman

V. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES (cont'd)

ORDINANCE 13-2022 -AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF 13 NORTH CENTRAL AVENUE IN THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY TO RAMSEY HOUSING, INC. SO AS TO PROVIDE AN INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN THE BOROUGH  
(Tabled at the August 31, 2022 meeting, removed from the table on August 9, 2023)

Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Poppe

BE IT RESOLVED that an Ordinance Authorizing the Transfer of 13 North Central Avenue in the Borough of Ramsey, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey and Specifically Section 7-12.1 of Chapter 7 entitled Traffic and Section 8-2.2 and 8-3.2 of Chapter 8, entitled Municipal Parking Lots and On-Street Parking Areas, final reading by title and that said ordinance be adopted as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk be and she hereby is, directed to cause a copy of the title of said ordinance to be published in an official newspaper of the Borough in the manner provided by law together with notice of the date of introduction and adoption of said ordinance.

Councilman Gutwetter explained that last year, the Governing Body had tabled Ordinance 13-2022 which would transfer the property at 13 North Central Avenue from the Borough to Ramsey Housing, Inc. The ordinance was tabled to allow Ramsey Housing Inc. to further develop their plans, funding arrangements and obtain the necessary approvals from the Zoning Board. Zoning Board approval was obtained earlier this summer so the transfer may now occur. At the last Mayor & Council meeting, a motion was made to remove Ordinance 13-2022 from the table and the Borough Clerk was instructed to advertise for public hearing at tonight's meeting. Ramsey Housing Inc. will be demolishing the current structure on the property and constructing an independent living facility for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Mayor Dillon opened up the public hearing on Ordinance 13-2022.

Chris Botta, President, Ramsey Housing Inc., Thanked the Mayor and Council for the transfer of the property.

With no one wishing to be heard in council chambers or on the telephone, Mayor Dillon closed the public hearing on Ordinance 13-2022.

Roll Call:

Yay: Cusick, Gutwetter, Popolo, Poppe, Woods

Absent: Kilman

VI. APPOINTMENTS -

(Done earlier in the meeting)

Mayor Dillon made the following appointments

Brian Buccino, Ramsey Fire Department

Christopher McWilliams, Acting Sergeant, Ramsey PD, effective 08/30/23  
Sergeant, Ramsey PD, effective 09/13/23

Robert McMackin, Acting Sergeant, Ramsey PD, effective 08/30/23  
Sergeant, Ramsey PD, effective 09/13/23

Gaetano Belfert, Probationary Police Officer, Ramsey Police Department

Christopher Hulahan, Probationary Police Officer, Ramsey Police Department

K-9 Jack, Ramsey Police Department

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION (Done earlier in the meeting)  
Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilman Popolo

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:

- |          |             |   |
|----------|-------------|---|
| 172-2023 | Resolution: | payment of vouchers   |
| 173-2023 | Resolution: | ratifying the actions of the governing body for payroll number seventeen  |
| 174-2023 | Resolution: | ratifying the actions of the governing body for payroll number eighteen   |
| 175-2023 | Resolution: | proclaiming October 6, 2023 as Knock Out Opioid Abuse day in Ramsey   |
| 176-2023 | Resolution: | confirming the appointment of Brian Buccino to the Ramsey Fire Department   |
| 177-2023 | Resolution: | confirming the appointments of Christopher McWilliams and Robert McMackin to Acting Sergeants of the Ramsey Police Department, effective August 30, 2023 and to Sergeants of the Ramsey Police Department effective September 13, 2023                                      |
| 178-2023 | Resolution: | confirming the appointment of Gaetano Belfert as Probationary Police Officer of the Ramsey Police Department, effective September 13, 2023  |
| 179-2023 | Resolution: | confirming the appointment of Christopher Hulahan as Probationary Police Officer of the Ramsey Police Department, effective September 13, 2023  |
| 180-2023 | Resolution: | authorizing the transfer of funds in the amount of \$750,000 from the Borough's Affordable Housing Trust Fund to Ramsey Housing Inc. for development and construction of a residence at 13 N. Central Avenue for independent living for adults with developmental disorders |
| 181-2023 | Resolution: | receipt of 2022 audit   |
| 182-2023 | Resolution: | accepting the resignation of Danielle Monaghan from the Ramsey Health Department, effective September 22, 2023, with regret   |

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION (cont'd)

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

A. SPECIAL PERMITS:

B. BLOCK PARTY REQUESTS:

Kristi Luzetti, 48 W. Cedar Place is requesting permission to hold a block party on Saturday, September 16, 2023 from 3:00pm-10:00pm

Mark Zepf, 10 Twinbrook Court is requesting permission to hold a block party on Saturday, September 16, 2023 (rain date 9/17) from 12 noon- 9:00pm

Patti Gurney, Elm Place is requesting permission to hold a block party on Sunday, September 17, 2023 from 4:00pm -8:00pm

Noemi Rodriguez-Grimshaw, 93 Norman Drive, is requesting permission to hold a block party on Saturday, October 7, 2023 from 12 noon – 5:00pm

Roll Call:

Yay: Cusick, Gutwetter, Popolo, Poppe, Woods

VIII. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS (Done earlier in the meeting)

Mayor Dillon read the Knock Out Opioid Abuse Day Proclamation

Chief Lyman and Captain Cherven presented the following recipients with their medal awards, along with Mayor Dillon congratulating them.

Detective Sabatelli	Honorable Service Medal
Detective Garcia	Honorable Service Medal
Sergeant Thormann	Honorable Service Medal
Officer Finn	Honorable Service Medal
Sergeant Guilfoyle	Life Saving Medal
Officer Banta	Life Saving Medal
Officer DePalma	Life Saving Medal
Officer Stevens	Life Saving Medal

IX. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

- A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – Councilman Michael Gutwetter  
Congratulated those who received appointments and special awards this evening.

Ramsey Library – HVAC project should start in November; information will be posted on the library website. Children’s Room renovation is in the planning stages for next year. The Summer reading program was a huge success over prior years. August featured a therapy mini horse visit, a dinosaur adventure event, Art in the Dark and the final summer concert. The library now offers poster printing, laptop lending and tech assistance.

Pool Commission – The 2023 pool season ended with a very good season. Thanked the office staff, life guards and maintenance staff to help make it a smooth operation. A few facility projects will be discussed.

Recreation Commission – Ramsey Run is Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> with registration open until September 26<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers always needed for the Run. The Recreation Commission will be utilizing CivicRec for future events and registrations.

Acknowledged the efforts of Mayor Dillon, Borough Administrator Vozech, the emergency services and all of the volunteers from the organizations who combined for a very successful Ramsey Day.

- B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Councilman Peter Kilman  
Absent

- C. BUILDING, PLANNING & ZONING – Councilwoman Jane Woods  
Congratulated and thanked Brian Buccino, Chris McWilliams, Robert McMackin, Gaetano Belfort, Christopher Hulahan and K-9 Jack.

Congratulated Detective Sabatelli, Detective Garcia, Sergeant Thormann, Officer Finn, Sergeant Guilfoyle, Officer Banta, Officer DePalma and Officer Stevens on their medals. So thankful for their service and proud of the Ramsey Police Department.

Wished Danielle Monaghan all the best in her future endeavors.

Offered a huge thanks to Administrator Vozech, Borough Staff, DPW and all of the wonderful volunteer organizations for a spectacular Ramsey Day. We are lucky to have a town so dedicated to this tradition.

Thanked Mayor Dillon, Councilman Gutwetter and Deacon Tom Flanagan for the September 11<sup>th</sup> ceremony which was beautiful and serene. The community center was nearly full after two location changes, due to the weather. So grateful that Ramsey will Never Forget.



- C. BUILDING, PLANNING & ZONING – Councilwoman Jane Woods (cont'd)  
Senior Trustee Board – We will be hosting the Ramsey Community/Senior Center grand opening on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 12-2:00pm. Lunch will be served. The annual senior picnic was held indoors due to the weather, with over one hundred in attendance.
- D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilwoman Judy Cusick  
Congratulated and thanked Administrator Vozech, Mayor Dillon, DPW, borough staff and friends of Ramsey for the Ramsey Day celebration! Expressed how heartwarming it was to see so many people in attendance and how incredibly honored she is to be a citizen of this Borough and a public servant. It was a great day.

Congratulated Brian Buccino, Ramsey Fire Department, Sergeants Christopher McWilliams and Robert, Probationary Officers Gaetano Belfert and Christopher Hulahans and K-9 Jack well on their appointments.

I had a wonderful time this afternoon at ShopRite the “Let’s Bag Hunger Event”. And my friends – I had the honor to attend our 9/11 Memorial Service Monday evening at beautiful Community Center. May we never forget and God Bless America.

Planning Board – At the August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting there was one waiver application and one public hearing for I.G.S. Associates, LLC. On 470 N. Franklin Turnpike to modify a monument sign at the driveway entrance to the facility. The proposal at the hearing was approved. The next meeting is September 19<sup>th</sup>.

Shade Tree Commission - Please note that there is information on Our Borough’s website regarding the Shade Tree Commission.

Board of Public Works - The board 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.

At the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the Board of Public Works awarded the contract for Pine Street replacement of the 4-inch water main to Jo-Med Contracting Corp. and will do lead service line replacement as well.

Other Business - Ramsey resident, United States Army Veteran, VFW member and my friend and neighbor Alex Neeley will attempt to break the World Record for knuckle pushups on November 11<sup>th</sup>, Veteran’s Day! The current record is 9,241, however, those are standard pushups...Alex will be doing military–standard pushups on his knuckles. The event will start early at the Ramsey VFW post 682. Please join me in encouraging Alex for this journey.

- E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilwoman Sara Poppe  
Congratulated all of the appointees and medal recipients from the Ramsey PD and welcomed K-9 Jack to the force.

Ramsey Chamber of Commerce – Upcoming events include Farmers’ Market in October, Spooktacular on October 28<sup>th</sup> and Home for the Holidays on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Municipal Alliance – The Black Poster event will be at the Ramsey High School on October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.

Ramsey Journal – The Fall edition will be coming out in early November. Notifications will be going out to all volunteer organizations.

Wished Danielle Monaghan well as she moves forward in her career. She will be missed.

Thanked Councilman Gutwetter and Mayor Dillon for their moving words at the 9/11 Ceremony.

Thanked Administrator Vozech for all of his work on Ramsey Day, as well as the DPW, Chamber of Commerce, DPW, emergency services and all involved in the planning.

- F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilman Glen Popolo  
Congratulated all the appointees and special service recipients.

Thanked Mayor Dillon, Administrator Vozech and the DPW for the successful Ramsey Day.

Thanked the Mayor and Council for a beautiful 9/11 Ceremony.

RIFE – Held the Pool and BBQ party on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. There were over two hundred people who attended. Special thanks to the Mayor and Council, St. Paul Men’s Ministry and UNICO for their help. Challenger Soccer starts September 16<sup>th</sup>. The Halloween Party has been scheduled for October 20<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul cafeteria.

Environmental Commission – Discussed organic composting at the DPW yard and styrofoam collection.

- G. MAYOR DEIRDRE DILLON

Congratulated and thanked Administrator Vozech, the DPW and everyone who worked so hard on Ramsey Day. After long consideration regarding the weather, it was a great day.

Congratulated Sergeants McMackin and McWilliams and Probationary Police Officers Belfert and Hulahan and K-9 Jack. Congratulated the honorable service recipients and the lifesaving medal recipients and Brian Buccino on his appointment to the Fire Department.

Thanked everyone who helped with the 9/11 Ceremony, Borough Clerk Bendian and Administrator Vozech and Councilman Gutwetter who did a wonderful job, stepping in for Councilman Kilman. Thanked everyone who attended the ceremony, it is important that we never, ever forget.

H. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Bruce Vozeh

Resolution 177 – Confirms the appointments of Chris McWilliams and Rob McMackin as Sergeants of the Ramsey Police Department: The Ramsey Police Department (“RPD”) with the resignation of Sgt. Peterson and the creation of the new Administrative Sergeant in the Table of Organization, the RPD had two openings for Sergeants. The position was posted with five officers applying. The officers went through RPD internal interviews first and subsequent interviews with the Mayor, Council President Kilman, Councilman Gutwetter and myself. After this process, it was determined that Officers McWilliams and McMackin be appointed to Sergeant. The appointments were for acting Sergeant in the interim period from the conclusion of the promotion process until tonight’s meeting when their Mayoral Appointment and Council Confirmation Resolution are on the agenda

Resolutions 178 & 179 – Confirms the appointments of Gaetano Belfert and Christopher Hulahan as Probationary Police Officers: The Ramsey Police Department hiring process began in late spring identifying five new officers for appointment. Three of these officers were appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council earlier this summer. The remaining two candidates, being appointed tonight, were already enrolled and attending the Police Academy to obtain their certification when the Borough made them conditional offers of employment. This enables them to begin field training with the RPD and get out on the road quicker. Both Probationary Officers Belfert and Hulahan have completed virtually all of the Academy training for certification and will be graduating in just over a week from now.

Resolutions 180 – Authorizes the transfer of funds from Borough’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund to Ramsey Housing, Inc.: Ramsey Housing Inc. has requested a contribution from the Borough’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund of \$750,000 for a portion of the project development and construction costs. The Borough Affordable Housing Trust Fund is funded through mandated fees on construction projects in the Borough. This fund does not utilize any Borough funds raised from property taxes and has specific guidelines on what the funds may be utilized for. The project proposed by Ramsey Housing fits squarely into the guidelines for utilization of the Trust Fund monies and this project will help the Borough in meeting its future needs in the next round of the State Affordable Housing requirements.

Resolution 181 – Confirming receipt of the 2022 Municipal Audit: Borough audit for 2022 was completed by independent auditors, Garbarini & Co. Auditors found no significant deficiencies, material weaknesses nor instances of noncompliance related to the Borough’s financial statements. We received an audit comment/recommendation regarding one instance where collective purchases throughout the year for a vendor (water/sewer chemicals) surpassed the bid threshold. This was unanticipated, during the year the collective purchases for different types of items were purchased, cumulatively exceeding the threshold. In addition, it is recommended that a fixed asset inventory be performed each year, which was not completed by the outside firm prior to end of calendar year 2022. Corrective action will be taken moving forward and a corrective action plan will be submitted for next meeting.

Resolution 182 – Accepts the resignation of Danielle Monaghan, with regret: Danielle has been a full-time employee with the Borough since 2019 with split duties in the Health Department and Tax Assessor Office as well as serving as the Local Registrar and Secretary for the Board of Health. She will be missed and wish her well as she moves forward in her career.

In Council President Kilman's absence Administrator Vozech provided the report on the Fire Department, Rescue Squad, OEM New Stationhouse Project Update.

Work continues with the Building Committee, Fire Dept, Rescue Squad, OEM and the Borough with Netta Architects on development and finalization of a design for the new Stationhouse. This is a large long-term capital investment which will serve the Borough, not only in the near future but through many generations of our residents and future emergency service members. Current project schedule and timeline is to continue design development and finalize so that construction documents can be drafted and finalized by December of this year or early 2024. As Council President Kilman has discussed at previous meetings, we have setup a page on the website for this project and as plans and information are developed and finalized these will be posted on the Borough website. As mentioned, Netta Architects is the firm the Borough has awarded the contract to for the Design Consulting Services of the project. I know we have discussed this at prior meetings but believe it bears repeating, Netta was selected through a Request for Proposals ("RFP") process from four firms with experience in emergency service building design. Firms submitted proposals and went through in-depth interviews and presentations with the Building Committee. After review it was the consensus and recommendation that the Borough retain Netta Architects, LLC as the firm for Design Services. Netta's contract is for four main phases of services from project initiation to construction documents as well as construction observation and administration through completion. This work is estimated to be over approximately a thirty (30) month timeline. Netta's contract fees also incorporate the costs of Netta's outside engineers and professionals working with them, for the Borough on the project including; Geotechnical Engineer, Environmental Engineer, Surveying, Structural Engineer, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing & Sprinkler Engineer, Low Voltage Systems Consultant, Emergency Radio and Cellular Communications Systems and Lighting Design. This structure saved the Borough money, time and improved project efficiency and coordination by having all these different disciplines working through Netta. Netta's contract amount is \$1,152,000, encompassing project work through all phases until project completion and closeout, as well as inclusive of compensation to the aforementioned engineers and other outside professionals.

Thanked the governing body and Councilwoman Poppe for their support on Ramsey Day, as well as Sherry, Kelly, Meredith and the DPW. Thanked the emergency services, volunteer and the Police Department for their help with the safety, keeping the public out of harms' way, due to the weather. And lastly thanked all of the organizations who participated to make it the great day that it is.

- I. BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Peter A. Scandariato, Esq. – No report
  
- J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian - No report
  
  
- X. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES - None

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

XII. NEW BUSINESS - None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilman Gutwetter.  
All in favor. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.

Meredith Bendian, RMC  
Borough Clerk