

BOROUGH OF RAMSEY
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 24, 2021

BUDGET
PUBLIC HEARING

Due to COVID19 this meeting is being conducted telephonically. The dial-in number is (425)436-6365 Access Code 213563#. You may also view the meeting on the Ramsey Youtube Channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeBnVXBwSn_ILMuAGkSin9w

Mayor Dillon called the meeting to order at 7:31pm, led the flag salute and read the Open Public Meetings Act notice.

I. ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Dillon, Councilpersons Cusick (via phone), Gutwetter (via phone), Jones (via phone), Weber (via phone) and Woods (via phone)

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

Absent: Councilman Kilman

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 02-24-21

Motion to approve and file the minutes by Councilwoman Cusick, seconded by Councilman Jones. All in favor. Carried.

III. COMMUNICATIONS -

Motion to receive and file by Councilman Weber seconded by Councilman Councilman Weber thanked Chris Martin for his years of service to the borough as well as Scott Osback. Mayor Dillon concurred. All in favor. Carried.

1. Christopher Martin, Borough of Ramsey Prosecutor
letter dated March 15, 2021, informing of his resignation due to work obligations
2. Alison Gordon, Northwest Bergen County Utilities Authority, 30 Wyckoff Ave, Waldwick, NJ
letter dated March 17, 2021, enclosing minutes from the February 27, 2021 meeting
3. Scott Osback, Ramsey Fire Prevention
letter dated March 17, 2021, informing of his retirement, effective March 30, 2021

Motion to table Ordinance 09-2021 for further consideration by Councilwoman Woods, seconded by Councilman Weber. Mayor Dillon explained that this is the cannabis business ordinance which is being tabled tonight. It is understood that there will be more state legislation regarding the current law and will wait to review that.

ROLL CALL:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Jones, Weber, Woods

ABSENT: Kilman

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone wishing to address the governing body please give your name (spelling the last name) and address as a courtesy. Please speak in an audible tone and address your comments to the Chair. There will be a three-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 present, 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.

Chance Parker, Ramsey, NJ

Commented on the links on the borough website to meetings not being easily accessible, the newly acquired property on N. Central Ave and the use of the property, the old senior center at Finch Park, the data behind the consideration of the cannabis ordinance and the opposition resolution of the NJ legislation for cannabis, future cannabis policies.

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

Mayor Dillon replied to Mr. Parker regarding the links to the various meetings, the property at 13 N. Central that the borough deemed fit for housing for special needs, the use of the old senior center to be used by the VFW which has grown now that other towns have closed their lodges and the resolution opposing legislation on cannabis after consultation with the Chief of Police, are not in favor of the law not notifying parents of a minor in possession of marijuana.

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

VI. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Dillon made the following appointments

Ken Tyburczy, Board of Public Works
(filling the unexpired term of C. Martin)

Bayron Zabala, Planning Board
(filling the unexpired term of N. Haas)

Mayor Dillon thanked Christopher Martin for his over twenty years of service to the Board of Public Works and Nick Haas for his service to the Planning Board.

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION

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:

- | | | |
|----------|-------------|--|
| 071-2021 | Resolution: | payment of vouchers |
| 072-2021 | Resolution: | ratifying the actions of the governing body for payroll number six |
| 073-2021 | Resolution: | authorizing the tax redemption for Block 2802 Lot 15 in the amount of \$3,644.12 |
| 074-2021 | Resolution: | awarding contract for disposal of mixed debris, grass and branches to Organic Recycling, Inc., 895 Pulaski Highway, Goshen, New York in the amount of \$33,750.00 for one (1) year |
| 075-2021 | Resolution: | confirming the appointment of Ken Tyburczy to the Board of Public Works |
| 076-2021 | Resolution: | approving change orders #12 and #14 to APS Contracting, Inc. for the Senior Center and Site Work project. Change orders are for #12 additional sidewalk work for \$893.33, change order #14 is a credit for final restoration of seeding in the bocce court and basin areas of \$5,000.00, resulting in a decrease of \$4,106.67 |
| 077-2021 | Resolution: | authorizing the disposal of obsolete equipment no longer needed for Borough use |
| 078-2021 | Resolution: | accepting the resignation of Scott Osback, part-time inspector for Fire Prevention Bureau, effective March 30 th , with regret |
| 079-2021 | Resolution: | confirming the appointment of Shelby Taylor as part-time inspector for the Fire Prevention Bureau, effective March 30, 2021 |

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION (cont'd)

080-2021 Resolution: requesting amendments to the NJ cannabis legislation

081-2021 Resolution: accepting the resignation of Christopher Martin, Ramsey Prosecutor, with regret

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

A. SPECIAL PERMITS:

Ramsey VFW Post 12148 is requesting permission to hold their annual poppy sale in front of Uncle G's, Shoprite, Ramsey Gourmet, Ramsey Liquors and the Ramsey Post Office on Saturday, May 1 – June 30 (permission granted from all property owners)

B. BLOCK PARTY REQUESTS:

ROLL CALL:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Jones, Weber, Woods

ABSENT: Kilman

VIII. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS - None

Mayor Dillon explained that the 2021 public hearing on the municipal budget was tonight. It had been introduced at the February 24th meeting and a budget newsletter was mailed to all residents. Mayor Dillon asked for a motion to go out of the regular order of business for the 2021 municipal budget public hearing. Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Woods.

ROLL CALL:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Jones, Weber, Woods

➤ Mayor Dillon opened the public hearing for consideration of the 2021 municipal budget.

Borough Administrator Vozeh gave a quick overview of the budget.

Tonight is the public hearing on the 2021 Municipal Budget and subsequently the vote on adoption of the budget. Here is some budget information which has been provided at previous Mayor & Council meetings and publicly available and then a quick summary of the 2021 Municipal Budget.

Municipal Budget presentation was made at the February 10th Mayor & Council meeting and has been available on the Borough's website

Municipal Budget was introduced at the February 24th Mayor & Council meeting and the line-item budget has been available on the Borough's website

At the March 10th Mayor & Council meeting an overview of the budget was again provided and recap of information received on a number of the other Northwest Bergen municipal budgets and their 2021 municipal increases

Last week the 2021 Municipal Budget Brochure was mailed out to all residents. This includes a discussion of the 2021 Municipal Budget with a 0% tax increase along with detailed line items of the 2020 & 2021 municipal budgets. This is also available on the Borough website.

Here are a number of the points that have been discussed on this 2021 Municipal Budget:

Meets the objective of adopting a prudent and responsible budget while continuing to provide a high level of service to taxpayers

No municipal tax rate increase in 2021, also is the 11th consecutive year with increases below 2%

Number of revenue line items will be below 2020 pre-pandemic levels reflecting the continued economic impact of COVID-19

2020 budget reduction measures taken are providing funds which are being utilized as surplus in the 2021 budget to help keep tax rate flat

Borough has implemented and negotiated further appropriation line-item reductions for 2021 to offset contractual and statutory appropriation increases to other line items

Ramsey ranks in the lowest tier of municipal tax rates in Bergen County with the 7th lowest

of 70 municipalities share of tax dollars going to municipal services at 19.5%. This is 54% below the county wide average of 30.1% of taxes to municipal services

Ramsey maintains favorable ranking for municipal tax rates, debt and surplus levels with other NW Bergen municipalities

2021 budget continues to reduce municipal debt levels while addressing necessary capital infrastructure investments

As a comparison here are the projected municipal rate increases from the other Northwest Bergen towns participating in Administrator's meeting at the beginning of March.

- Oakland – Planning on a municipal tax rate increase of 3.54%
- Franklin Lakes – Projecting a 2.37% increase in municipal rate.
- Glen Rock – Working to get down to a 3% municipal increase.
- Ridgewood – Proposing a 4.7% municipal tax rate increase
- HoHoKus – Approximately a 2% municipal increase
- Waldwick – Anticipating a 0% municipal increase
- Therefore, of the other 7 towns at the meeting, 6 anticipate being at or over a 2% municipal rate increase in 2021, which Ramsey has not exceeded once in the last 11 years

The 2021 budget meets the objective of adopting a prudent and responsible budget while continuing to provide a high level of service to tax payers. There is no municipal tax rate increase in 2021.

Borough Auditor, Paul Garbarini thanked the Finance Committee and Administrator Vozeh and CFO Bartalotta for their help and commented that the budget meets all statutory requirements. Applauded the borough for their use of surplus and maintenance of surplus to help in times like these.

Mayor Dillon opened the public hearing on the 2021 municipal budget.

Chance Parker, Ramsey, NJ

Asked about the health department funding during the pandemic and the land use administration regarding the master plan. Administrator Vozeh replied that the budget was slightly reduced from last year but we are above what we spent last year and are comfortable with the levels that are in the budget for health services. As far as the land use/master plan there has been work done on it in the past and we are comfortable with the level we are at for 2021.

Mr. Parker also expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the borough on this particular budget.

Jen Burns, 260 Grove Street, Ramsey

Thanked the governing body for approving the grant application for the 13 N. Central property.

With no one else wishing to be heard, Mayor Dillon closed the public hearing for the 2021 budget. Thanked everyone for their hard work on the budget.

Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Woods

Resolution: 082-2021 Adoption of the 2021 Municipal Budget

ROLL CALL:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Jones, Weber, Woods

ABSENT: Kilman

IX. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – Councilman Michael Gutwetter

Thanked Christopher Martin and Scott Osback for their years of service to the borough and congratulated the new appointees.

Ramsey Library – They are hosting virtual workshops and recently participated in the annual New Jersey Makers Day.

Recreation Commission – The Spring Egg Hunt was cancelled due to COVID.

Finch Park Summer Camp will run from June 30th to July 30th from 9am-12:30 with no lunch. It will have a maximum of 275 campers.

Adult Soccer will be held depending on the enrollment. The Lacrosse clinic will begin in late April on the Ramsey HS front lawn. Baseball and softball for boys and girls will begin soon.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Councilman Harry Weber

Congratulated the new appointees.

Thanked Administrator Vozeh, CFO Bartalotta, Auditor Paul Garbarini and the Finance Committee for a job well done on the budget.

C. BUILDING, PLANNING & ZONING – Councilwoman Jane Woods

Board of Health – They continue to help seniors who have been frustrated scheduling vaccine appointments and the county has provided some direction. Discussed vaccine protocol availability and transportation options as well as the Vulnerable Population Task Force.

COVID testing was held today in Ramsey with over 76 participants.

Ramsey Seniors – Continue to be active via zoom.

Expressed how proud she is of the 0% increase in the municipal portion, still providing terrific services to the residents.

Congratulated Ken Tyburczy and Bayron Zabala and thanked Chris Martin and Scott Osback.

D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilman Peter Kilman

Mayor Dillon reported that they continue to bring the Spring Street and Orchard Street wells back on line and the work to make the Martis Avenue filtration pod and pumphouse look more residential.

- E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilman William Jones
Thanked the budget committee and staff for their job on the budget.

Congratulated the new appointees tonight.

Thanked Chris Martin, Scott Osback and Nick Haas. A special thank you to Mr. Martin after being a member of the BPW as well as the Municipal Prosecutor.

Reminded everyone that the Farmers' Market continues every Sunday at the Train Station parking lot. It was voted Number One Farmers' Market in Bergen County for the 11th straight year.

The Pool Commission posted the rates for this year with early discounts and early bird specials. We are expecting increases in membership this season. Rates will increase due to outside considerations such as increases in minimum wages.

Please continue to support the local businesses who were impacted by the pandemic. You can check out the chamber of commerce website.

- F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilwoman Judy Cusick
Thanked Mr. Osback, Mr. Martin and Mr. Haas for their service to the town.
Congratulated Mr. Tyburezy and Mr. Zabala on their appointments. Regarding the zero percent tax increase for the municipal budget – she applauded the resourcefulness and discipline of our Ramsey Team members. This is so incredibly impressive.

Planning Board Meeting - At the meeting on March 16th there were three Site Plan Waivers: The Beauty Chateau, Commonwealth 540 Inc., and Gil Santos Landscaping LLC. which were all approved. There was no public hearing. There was one resolution approved during the meeting for Brian Gutterman on 160 Forest Avenue for Soil Movement.

Ramsey Board of Education:

All residents are encouraged to keep current with the Board of Education activities because 69% of Ramsey Residents' property taxes are for the Board of Education.

The March 23rd meeting was cancelled.

Ramsey Responds - The Church of Saint Paul will conclude their Fish Fry on Friday, March 26th. Each week, Saint Paul's donated 100 meals to Ramsey Responds. For the Food Pantry - Donations are always welcome. Food collection occurs every Tuesday from 4-5:30pm at St. Paul's with distribution on Fridays. There is a Ramsey Responds Social Media website that contains additional information regarding projects and requests for the pantry

G. MAYOR DEIRDRE DILLON

Welcomed Mr. Tyburczy to the Board of Public Works and Bayron Zabala on his appointment to the Planning Board.

Offered a special thanks to the Finance Committee with its leadership of Councilman Gutwetter, CFO Bartalotta and Borough Administrator Vozeh along with the department heads. Very happy to have a zero percent municipal increase when people are suffering economically from the effects of the pandemic.

Announced everyone that Saturday, March 27th is the Fire Department Easter Bunny parade at 1:00pm.

Ramsey Responds is now accepting fresh fruits and vegetables.

Indoor dining is at 50% capacity as well as outdoor dining, since March 1st. Hair and nail salons and gyms, etc., are now at 50% capacity. Please consider supporting these businesses.

H. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Bruce Vozeh

Discussed resolutions listed on the agenda earlier this evening.

Resolution 074 – Resolution awards a one-year contract to Organic recycling for the disposal of mixed debris, grass and branches as the low bid. Therefore, as the low bid and with Organic having previously provided this service to the Borough and is qualified to perform such service, contract is recommended for award.

Resolutions 076 – Resolutions approves two minor change orders on the APS Contracting project for the Senior Center and Site Work. Change order #12 is for additional concrete sidewalk work added for \$893.33 and Change Order #14 is a contract reduction of \$5,000 for final restoration of seeding in the bocce court and retention basin area as the Borough will do the final work in those areas. These result in a net contract decrease of \$4,106.67.

Resolution 077 – This resolution allows the Borough to dispose of obsolete computer hardware consisting of two desktop units.

Resolution 078 & 079 – Resolutions involve the Fire Prevention Bureau where one of our part-time inspectors is retiring and we are replacing them with a new part-time inspector, similar or slightly decreased number of hours weekly.

Resolution 80 – Resolution opposes parts of the new cannabis legislation particularly regarding the investigation, enforcement and notification provisions regarding illegal usage by those individuals under the age of 21.

Thanked Ken Tyburczy and Bayron Zabala for stepping up to serve and thanked Chris Martin, Scott Osback and Nick Haas for their service.

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

J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian - No report

X. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE 09-2021 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY, CHAPTER 34 SECTION 34-40 THEREOF SO AS TO PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF ANY CLASS OF CANNABIS BUSINESS WITHIN ITS GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES * TABLED *

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XII. NEW BUSINESS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilman Weber, seconded by Councilman Gutwetter. All in favor. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Meredith Bendian, RMC
Borough Clerk