

BOROUGH OF RAMSEY  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, April 28, 2021

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](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeBnVXBwSn_ILMuAGkSin9w)

Mayor Dillon called the meeting to order at 7:30pm asked Administrator Vozeh to lead 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), Kilman (via phone), Weber (via phone) and Woods (via phone)

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES WS 04-14-21

Motion to accept and file by Councilman Weber, seconded by Councilwoman Cusick  
All in favor. Carried.

III. COMMUNICATIONS -

Motion to receive and file by Councilman seconded by Councilman Kilman. All in favor.  
Carried.

1. George Bumiller, Ramsey, NJ  
fax dated April 13, 2021, making suggestions for the website
2. George Bumiller, Ramsey, NJ  
fax dated April 9, 2021, making various comments and suggestions for the website
3. George Bumiller, Ramsey, NJ  
fax dated April 19, 2021, making various suggestions for the website
4. James Rotundo, Executive Director, Northwest Bergen County Utilities Authority  
30 Wyckoff Avenue, Waldwick, NJ 07463  
email received April 26, 2021, regarding a notice concerning the public hearing on NBCUA connection fees on May 18, 2021 at 7:00pm via zoom

#### IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone wishing to address the governing body 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.

Edward "Lefty" Grimes, 84 Hanover Road, Sativa Cross

Asked the governing body to consider allowing cannabis shops in the borough to help the sick and dying. Advocating for cannabis patients and people in wheelchairs through nonprofit Sativa Cross.

Mayor Dillon thanked Mr. Grimes for his comments and replied explaining that the borough tabled the ordinance and are doing further research on the subject.

Michael Asher, 141 E. Main Street, Golden Triangle Coin Shop

Asked for the bicycle path to end at Main Street next to his shop and not continue to the other side of the street. It is dangerous for people crossing the street. Parking is an issue also. Mayor Dillon said she would follow up with Chief Gurney.

Hugh Giordano -57 Argyle Avenue, Blackwood, NJ - A representative for Union Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 152 advocated for New Jersey to legalize recreational marijuana. It will create good union jobs. He said that Ramsey should welcome the jobs that dispensaries bring.

George Bumiller, Ramsey, NJ

Discussed the agenda on the website not having the backup attached. The Mayor explained it was an oversight and the clerk would update the website after the meeting.

Jeffrey King, 24 Elizabeth Parkway, Eatontown, NJ

Echoed the comments of the previous speakers in favor of cannabis adding that it would be great for the community, helping the sick and suffering. Asking for the governing body to consider legalizing cannabis in Ramsey.

With no one else wishing to be heard, after several calls for public comment, Mayor Dillon closed public comment.

V. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

ORDINANCE 10-2021 - AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE VACATION OF A PORTION OF UPLAND ROAD IN THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Motion by Councilman Kilman seconded by Councilwoman Woods

BE IT RESOLVED THAT AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED: An Ordinance Providing for the Vacation of a Portion of Upland Road in the Borough of Ramsey, Bergen County, New Jersey, final reading by title and that said ordinance be adopted by as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey and;

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 Kilman explained that this property may have been a potential extension of Upland Road dating back many years ago. After reviewing with all applicable borough departments, it is recommended that the borough vacate that area while retaining a utility easement through the 12 Manor Drive property. The vacation of the property will be split between 12 Manor Drive and 75 Upland Road as detailed in the new metes and bounds.

Mayor Dillon opened the public hearing on Ordinance 10-2021. With no one wishing to be heard, Mayor Dillon closed the public hearing.

ROLL CALL:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Jones, Kilman, Weber, Woods

VI. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Dillon made the following appointment

Michael Palumbo, Design Review Board, Alternate Number 2

VII. CONSENT RESOLUTION

Motion by Councilman Gutwetter, seconded by Councilwoman Woods

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:

- 095-2021 Resolution: payment of vouchers
- 096-2021 Resolution: ratifying the actions of the governing body for payroll number eight
- 097-2021 Resolution: authorizing a contract for the Northwest Bergen Cooperative Pricing Program with Ramsey as lead agency for the resurfacing of streets within the Boroughs of Glen Rock, Ho-Ho-Kus, Ramsey, Saddle River and Waldwick, Bergen County, New Jersey be awarded to D&L Paving Contractors, Inc., 675 Franklin Avenue, Nutley, NJ, 07110 in the amount of \$1,527,657.20.
- 098-2021 Resolution: confirming the appointment of Mike Palumbo to the Design Review Board as Alternate Number 2

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

A. SPECIAL PERMITS:

Knights of Columbus is requesting permission to collect funds on May 14-16, 2021 at Ramsey Liquors, Bottle King, Buono Bagels, B&G Bagels, Walgreens and Uncle Giuseppe's (permission was granted from all store owners)

B. BLOCK PARTY REQUESTS:

Sara Fischer Poppe of Biscayne Drive is requesting permission to hold a block party on Saturday, June 26, 2021 from 3:30 pm – 10:00 pm

ROLL CALL:

YAY: Cusick, Gutwetter, Jones, Kilman, Weber, Woods

VIII. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Dillon read a proclamation recognizing Arbor Day 2021.

## IX. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

### A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION – Councilman Michael Gutwetter

Reported that there was an HVAC leak at the Library on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> that caused flooding in parts of the building. Repairs continue but as of April 28<sup>th</sup> they continue curbside pickup and virtual programs.

The library is in the process of receiving applications for a new Part Time position to focus on marketing and public relations. Additional seating will be expanded around the library grounds, i.e., benches and table and WIFI.

Recreation Commission - Discussion started about the Ramsey Run in September. Adult softball program is up and running. Lacrosse K-2 clinic has about 35 children have registered. Adult soccer had to be cancelled due to low registration. Finch Park Camp has ongoing registration. The Home Run Derby is pending the Philadelphia Phillies approval and if approved it will be held in June.

### B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Councilman Harry Weber

Ramsey Municipal Alliance held a meeting last week and are getting a lot of things done. There are some mental health seminars coming up in May in conjunction with Mahwah. They selected a student to receive this year's scholarship. Alliance has also come up with a program for those struggling with the remote learning. LEAD Officer Beamon has lunch with the individuals and it really seems to be helping.

Environmental Commission – Ramsey Clean Up day last weekend with 170 volunteers. Thanked the commission for organizing it.

RIFE – Softball season is underway. First official game is Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.

### C. BUILDING, PLANNING & ZONING – Councilwoman Jane Woods

Congratulated Mike Palumbo on his appointment to Design Review Board.

Board of Health – New Bridge Medical Center is accepting walk ups for the Covid vaccine. All of the information can be found on the borough website.

May is mental health awareness month and the borough website includes information about West Bergen Mental Health Programs called Move for Mental Health.

Ramsey Seniors – They are finishing up the final punch list.

Design Review Board – Met on April 27<sup>th</sup>. There were six applications that we approved. Discussed the need to encourage compliance of the elimination of blinking neon lights and the need to clarify the use LED lights in store windows.

D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilman Peter Kilman

Board of Public Works - Reported that the water treatment pods are on schedule and they've begun the aesthetic improvements of the pods in residential areas. They've done a great job.

The Zoning Board will hold a special meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> for 24 Grant Street.

Shade Tree Commission – The Emerald Ash Borer is in Ramsey and can forever change the neighborhood. They can destroy an Ash tree very quickly. Explained that it looks like a 3–4-inch strip of bare bark. Please contact the Shade Tree Commission if you think your tree is impacted by this.

Thanked and congratulated Mike Palumbo on his appointment.

E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilman William Jones

Thanked Michael Palumbo for serving the borough.

Reminded everyone to shop local and support local business. Please use the Ramsey Chamber of Commerce website to see what is available.

Regarding Memorial Day, Independence Day and Ramsey Day events there is still discussion about plans due to restrictions. Nothing definitive, yet.

Reminded everyone that the Farmers' Market continues every Sunday at the Train Station.

The Ramsey Pool membership has surpassed last year's numbers. Bands have been booked for every Friday, swim team has begun and swim lesson registration will be up soon. There will be another in person sign up at the Pool on May 14<sup>th</sup> from 2pm-6pm for those who cannot get onto a computer or need assistance. The Early Bird discount is in effect until May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Responded to Mr. Bumiller's communications that the YouTube live streaming was instituted for Mayor and Council meetings, only.

F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilwoman Judith Cusick

Thanked Mayor Dillon and wished good evening to all in attendance. Welcomed Michael Palumbo to the Planning Board.

Ramsey Planning Board - The meeting for April 20<sup>th</sup> was cancelled and the next meeting is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ramsey Board of Education - Encouraged resident to keep current with the Board of Education activities because 69% of Ramsey Residents' property taxes are for the Board of Education.

F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilwoman Judith Cusick (cont'd)

At the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, the following topics were discussed:

The Ramsey School System is participating in an Energy Savings Improvement Plan. This plan includes swapping in LED lighting, changing over to more efficient classroom HVAC equipment and using Solar Panels to generate electricity for use. There are some financial advantages of the Energy Savings program.

Superintendent Report: In May, there will be a virtual 5K race for the Ramsey Education Foundation. He noted that May is Mental Health Awareness month.

There will be no spring 2021 administration of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments. There will be no PARC testing. There will be a modified testing “Start Strong” in the fall of 2021. Advanced Placement tests are still being administered this spring.

The 2021-2022 Budget was discussed. The budget for the Ramsey School District for the next school year is \$76.8M. According to the presenter, this will be a \$72/year increase on assessed homes in the district. There was no mention of the 2020-2021 budget during the presentation, but in the Board of Education’s webpage data, there was a proposed amount of \$70.1M (all fund revenues) for the previous year. As per the budget presentation, the amount for the next school year is now \$76.8M.

There were no public comments or questions regarding the \$76.8M Ramsey School District budget.

Ramsey Responds – Food Pantry, donations are always welcome. Food collection occurs every Tuesday from 4-5:30pm at St. Paul’s with distribution on Fridays. Per their social media, the pantry supplies are low on: Canned Vegetables and Fruits, Canned Meats, Tuna, 1 - 2 lb. Bags of Rice, Parmalat, Oatmeal, Pancake Mix & Syrup, Coffee, and Beans. Fresh Produce is also welcome.

On May 15<sup>th</sup> the Max Challenge of Ramsey on Route 17 will host a “Max Day of Giving” fundraiser for Ramsey Responds from 9am to 1pm. There will be fitness classes, wellness vendors and retailers present. There is a Ramsey Responds social media page that contains additional information regarding projects and requests for the pantry.

G. MAYOR DEIRDRE DILLON

The borough will hold the Memorial Day service at Veterans’ Park.

May is Mental Health Awareness month. Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Murphy put together a program called Shine Your Light, a fundraiser for West Bergen Mental Health. Check the Board of Website for details.

Thanked Michael Palumbo for serving on Design Review Board.

Thanked the Ramsey Environmental Commission for organizing the Ramsey Clean Up Day and all of the volunteers who helped clean up Ramsey.

Regarding the cannabis ordinance, the borough is considering medical and recreational sales in the borough. This would be done by ordinance which would have a public hearing for any public comment.

New Bridge Medical Center in Paramus has walk up appointments for the Covid vaccine. You do not need an appointment.

H. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Bruce Vozech

Commented on Resolution 097-2021 regarding the Northwest Bergen Shared Services Group. The borough is the lead agency of the Northwest Bergen Coop and collectively go out to bid for the five towns which include Glen Rock, Ho-Ho-Kus, Saddle River and Waldwick for the 2021 road resurfacing. This resolution award is for the master contract for the five towns. A funding ordinance will be introduced at the next meeting for Ramsey's allocation of this project. And an award for the Ramsey portion of the project at a subsequent meeting. Collectively bidding the project allows for competitive pricing.

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

J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian

Spoke about the communications received regarding the website explaining that all suggestions are discussed and any changes that can be made in house are done. The borough is limited as to what changes they can make to the website and are lucky to have Kelly Sylvester as an in-house webmaster who is constantly updating the website.

X. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES - None

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS



XII. NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing on the submission of a 2021 Bergen County Trust Fund Grant Application for Park Development at Finch Park, 191 Church Street. Proposed improvements include the remediation of the old court and street hockey rink at Finch Park and conversion of courts to gated Pickleball Courts.

Administrator Vozech explained the improvements that were being applied for to Bergen County.

Mayor Dillon opened the public hearing for the Bergen County Trust Fund Grant Application for Park Development at Finch Park.

With no one wishing to be heard, Mayor Dillon closed the public hearing.

099-2021 Resolution: authorizing the submission of a 2021 Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Municipal Park Improvement grant application

Motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilman Gutwetter.

Roll Call:

YAY: Cusick, Guwetter, Jones, Kilman, Weber, Woods

Councilman Jones spoke about Ernie Larrat, a longtime Ramsey Resident who passed away and offered his condolences to the family. Mayor Dillon added that although he had moved out of town a few years ago he told the Mayor that he still considered himself a Ramsey resident.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilman Gutwetter. All in favor. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

Meredith Bendian, RMC  
Borough Clerk