

ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP COUNCIL – MAY 11, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Regular Meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Rockaway was held on Tuesday, May 11, 2021. This meeting was held remotely/electronically using the platform Webex Events and commenced at approximately 6:33PM.

Council President Jackson led those present in the flag salute.

Council President Jackson called for a moment of silence to remember the services and sacrifices of the armed service members who protect our Nation and the first responders who protect our neighborhoods.

Roll Call was taken for attendance.

Present: Council Members Kelley, Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, and Jackson.

Present from Administration: Mayor Michael Puzio, Attorney Iacofano, Attorney Perrone, Ms. Patricia Seger, Mr. David Dyer, Ms. Lisa Palmieri, and Ms. Allison Ferrante.

Council President Jackson stated, "Please be advised that all electronic/remote meetings of the Township Council held on Webex are recorded. All members of the public will be provided the opportunity to speak. During any "public hearing" or "open to the public" sections of the meeting, the Township Clerk will unmute each member of the public and ask if they wish to speak. As per Rockaway Township Code 2-5.14, any person desiring to address the Council shall first seek recognition by the presiding officer; and upon recognition by the chair, the person shall give their name and address for the record. Unless further time is granted by the Council, they shall limit their statement to five minutes. Statements shall be addressed to the Council as a body and not to any member thereof. A Councilman shall not direct any question to a speaker addressing the Council, except through the presiding officer. In addition to speaking on the record during Council Meetings, members of the public may submit questions and comments to the Council by emailing questions@rockawaytownship.org by the end of the "Open to the Public" session."

Council President Jackson stated, "This meeting was advertised in the Daily Record and the Star Ledger, the official newspapers for the Township of Rockaway on April 10, 2021. Notice was posted on the official bulletin boards of Rockaway Township."

Motion was made by Council President Jackson, seconded by Council Member Quinn, to remove item #12 from the Agenda, an Item for Discussion per Councilman Kelley: Reports/Records Requested under NJSA 40:69A-37.1 and NJSA 47:1A-1 [OPRA].

Council President Jackson stated that this item has nothing to do with Council business. Council Member Kelley disagreed.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 8 (Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 1 (Kelley)

Motion carries.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

April 27, 2021 – Regular Meeting

Motion was made by Council Member Quinn, seconded by Council Vice President Sackett, to approve the April 27, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 8 (Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 1 (Kelley)

Motion carries.

ORDINANCE TO ADOPT:

O-21-21 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 6 "ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL" OF THE GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ROCKAWAY

No member of the Public or Council commented.

Motion was made by Council Member Kelley, seconded by Council Member Quinn, to adopt Ordinance O-21-21.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 9 (Kelley, Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 0

Motion carries.

O-21-22 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 10, ENTITLED POLICE DEPARTMENT, OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ROCKAWAY TO PROVIDE THE ADMINISTRATION WITH DISCRETION TO HIRE ENTRY LEVEL POLICE OFFICERS PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 11A:4-1.3

No member of the Public commented.

Council Member Kelley stated that the ordinance allows Administration to hire police officers without a Civil Service test. He asked if a recruitment process for hiring officers has begun. He also asked if there is a potential military bypass. Mayor Puzio explained that Civil Service will be producing the framework for hiring that the Township will need to abide by. Council Member Kelley expressed concern with the ordinance. There was discussion.

Motion was made by Council Member Friedlander, seconded by Council Member Quinn, to adopt Ordinance O-21-22.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 8 (Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 1 (Kelley)

Motion carries.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Jim Warters, 48 Seneca Avenue. Mr. Warters asked what the role of Council is in hiring and firing because it would seem to him that this falls on Administration.

Kris Bush, 4 Stone Ridge Court. Mr. Bush stated that he is in the fire service and expressed his frustration with Administration. He said that there was a power outage today and the generator at the firehouse didn't work. He expressed the need for the Township to provide preventative maintenance. He noted that Council has approved purchases in the past that Administration then didn't purchase. He stated that he had purchased parts to repair fire department equipment, and raised concern regarding the process involved with getting reimbursed. He noted that these firefighters are volunteers, saving the town money and they aren't being treated well.

Michael Ilardi, 19 North Brookside Drive. Mr. Ilardi asked if there is any plan to return to in-person meetings as he thinks that virtual meetings are hard for the residents to attend. Mr. Ilardi asked about the Food Truck resolution that is on the consent agenda and said that White Meadow Lake (WML) needs more information concerning the permits that they are required to take out. Ms. Seger said that she is in communication with the attorney for WML. She continued that the special events permit allows residents, businesses, and organizations to hold special events that are otherwise prohibited in certain zones. Ms. Seger stated that Administration is trying to work with and help WML.

Pat Degnan, 88 Valley View Drive. Ms. Degnan stated that the Township building has not been open for a long time and that appointments only on Tuesdays and Thursdays are inconvenient for residents. She added that the WML Fire Department will be holding a Memorial Day sunrise service although she is not sure about breakfast.

William Degnan, 88 Valley View Drive. Mr. Degnan said that he is happy to see plans for Peterson and that he likes the progress made with the basketball courts and the idea to name them after Dachisen. He also said that if you can make it, please attend the Memorial Day sunrise service.

ORDINANCES TO INTRODUCE:

O-21-23 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 54 ENTITLED "LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ROCKAWAY TO PERMIT MEDICAL AND RECREATIONAL CANNABIS FACILITIES

Motion was made by Council Member Quinn, seconded by Council Member Friedlander, to introduce Ordinance O-21-23.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 9 (Kelley, Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 0

Motion carries.

CONSENT AGENDA:

R-21-83 REDEMPTION OF TAX TITLE LIEN C#19-021 AGAINST BLOCK 11507.01 LOT 1 KNOWN AS 322 RICHARD MINE RD, A2.

R-21-84 REDEMPTION OF TAX TITLE LIEN C#18-027 AGAINST BLOCK 21001 LOT 8 KNOWN AS 11 COMANCHE AVE.

R-21-85 AMENDING RESOLUTION R-21-33 BY ADDING TO THAT RESOLUTION'S LIST OF AUTHORIZED VENDORS FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN GOODS AND SERVICES THROUGH THE USE OF STATE, COUNTY AND REGIONAL COOPERATIVE CONTRACTS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2021

R-21-86 SEWER MAINTENANCE BILLING AND YEAR-END PENALTY ADJUSTMENT FOR PONDVIEW ESTATES, INC.

R-21-87 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF ROCKAWAY FIRE DEPARTMENT (EMS) AND ST. CLARES ESTABLISHING A MEDICAL DIRECTOR PURSUANT TO N.J.A.C. 8:40-1.2 ET SEQ.

R-21-88 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF ROCKAWAY AND WHITE MEADOW LAKE POA & COUNTRY CLUB TO ALLOW THE OPERATION OF FRIDAY NIGHT FOOD TRUCK EVENTS FROM APRIL 30, 2021 TO APRIL 29, 2022

R-21-89 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS LOCAL RECREATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT PARK LAKE

Motion was made by Council Member Kelley to remove resolutions R-21-88 and R-21-89 from Consent Agenda for separate discussion and vote. No one seconded.

Council Member Kelley asked if it was required to have a second to a motion to remove an item from the Consent Agenda. Ms. Clipperton stated that it was the policy of this Council and advice of the Township Attorney to have a motion and a second.

Motion was made by Council Member Kelley to remove resolution R-21-89 from Consent Agenda for separate discussion and vote. No one seconded.

Motion was made by Council Member Quinn, seconded by Council Vice President Sackett, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 8 (Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 0

Abstentions: 1 (Kelley)

Motion carries.

RESOLUTION:

R-21-90 AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO PLACE A PERMANENT SIGN NAMING THE PETERSON FIELD BASKETBALL COURTS THE "MICHAEL G. DACHISEN BASKETBALL COURTS"

Motion was made by Council Member Quinn, seconded by Council Member Friedlander, to approve R-21-90.

Council Member Kelley asked if there would be any harm in amending this and naming the entire complex to include Mayor Dachisen. Mayor Puzio stated that he had done some research and that there is a potential legal issue. He continued that this could always be changed at a later date.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 9 (Kelley, Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 0

Motion carries.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS/REPORTS:

Discussion: Cancellation of Meetings

Motion was made by Council Member Kelley, seconded by Council President Jackson to cancel the second meetings in June, July and August.

Roll Call Was Taken.

Yah Votes: 9 (Kelley, Quinn, Friedlander, Kritz, Salberg, Brookes, Noon, Sackett, Jackson)

Nah Votes: 0

Motion carries.

Council Member Friedlander reported that the Historical Society had an outside event by the church/library on Green Pond Road that was well attended. He thanked the Police Chief for the traffic safety work. He said that the library had a couple of issues including a cleanup that the Mayor and DPW addressed. The Board of Assessment Commissioners (BOAC) has a meeting scheduled on May 26th at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal building.

Council Member Kelley asked Council Member Friedlander about the BOAC meeting and noted that it is in person and the public may attend. He asked if there is a reason two Township Attorneys are in attendance at tonight's meeting. He stated that Ms. Seger had reported that the recycling facilities have increased hours on Saturday but he said Monday there was an attendant at the Mt. Hope Rd. location turning people away and questioned if it was really necessary to close on Mondays. He said to Mr. Ilardi and the POA that because they're not-for-profit the Mayor can waive fees and he wasn't able to say this during the Consent Agenda vote because there wasn't discussion. He asked Ms. Seger if she was aware of a contractor hired by the Township hitting wires and causing a power outage on Telemark Road. He continued that the contractor left without notifying anyone. He said the Township could offset many costs by utilizing employees to do more in-house to save tax payers money. He asked if the grant money pertaining to R-21-89 is specific to Park Lake or can funds be spread to other areas.

Council Member Kritz reported that he is very happy with the resolution renaming the basketball courts and commended Township employees for their work on Township fields. He stated that the CDC will soon be recommending vaccines for kids ages 12 and up, and that vaccines are readily available right now.

Council Member Salberg made a request of the Clerk for the next meeting for the guidelines for Old Business, New Business and Reports. He stated that he attended the Historical Society event and that it was a great day. He also stated the war against our diseased ash trees is continuing.

Council Member Noon reported that Birchwood School is doing a dine-to-donate event at Delizia's Pizza at 145 King Street in Dover.

Council Member Brookes stated that regarding the Parks Lake resolution, he believes that Ms. Ferrante addressed this at the last meeting. He said that Peterson Field is looking good and he thanked residents for following safety signage to stay away from the work area.

Council Member Quinn thanked Council for voting to approve the naming of the basketball courts after Mayor Dachisen. He reported that American Foods, the Old Stewart's, is doing a soft opening and it is another great business in the Township. He also reported that Rocco's Haircuts and More is offering free haircuts to the PAL program. He stated that the basketball courts look great and that spring sports are in full swing. He said that recreation employees are working hard and doing a great job with the fields.

Council Vice President Sackett stated that Council Member Kelley voted against the courts and the whole project. He continued that Council Member Kelley votes no on

anything important for the town. He noted that hopefully we can hear from Administration sooner rather than later on the issues that Kris Bush and Mike Ilardi brought up. He reported that there have been many outside events that people are going to, including Renegades lacrosse. He is looking forward to upcoming Babe Ruth games. He applauded Administration in their efficiency in assisting residents with issues in his ward.

Council President Jackson stated that he will bypass his report in order to give the Mayor more time.

Mayor Puzio reported that in response to Mr. Warters's inquiry about the responsibility Council has in hiring, they have no input. He said that the reason two attorneys are present at meetings is that we have been doing much work on ordinances and he believes it is good practice now to have them there in case there are questions that need to be answered. He added that quite often the attorneys don't bill for town work. He thanked Mr. Bush for his service in the Fire Department and he said that he has the utmost respect for the volunteers. He noted that concerns should be brought to the Chief who will speak with Administration, and that he was unaware of some of these things. He stated that Council Member Kelley spoke of a power outage and that he's bringing this to Administration now, at a Council meeting, and to please notify Administration immediately instead. He said that we are working with WML and will work through issues. He replied to Ms. Degnan's concern about re-opening, stating that the Township is working on a plan. He said that the Township has been working with Atlantic Health and that they're a fantastic organization. He noted that they are in the process of setting up a Surgical Center in their facility and that they've expanded considerably. He stated that Peterson is coming along nicely and thanked Council and the Recreation Committee members for their support and hard work. He ended by saying that he feels that he is ambushed by Council Member Kelley because he never allows him to prepare for any of his questions and he and Ms. Seger try to do the best they can, and that we are moving forward and the town is really starting to shine.

Attorney Iacofano stated that he had no report.

Ms. Seger responded to Ms. Degnan's concern by stating that the Township is working on re-opening the building in mid-July and that the employees are all at the building working and can conduct business outside or bring people in as needed. She stated that concerning the Fire Department, there is a process where the Chief can reach out to Administration and that we do support our volunteers. She said that Mr. Bush can reach out to her directly at any time. She continued that she has been working with the POA and as far as she knows they are not non-profit but she will continue to work with them to come to a mutually agreeable conclusion. She stated that she was on the phone with JCP&L regarding the power outage and that they were very responsive and kept the Township informed. She said that until the incident is investigated, she can't say what happened concerning the contractor that was there. She ended by thanking everyone for their support and noted that her door is always open.

Ms. Ferrante stated that she had no report.

Mr. Dyer stated that he had no report.

Ms. Palmieri stated that she had no report.

Council Member Kelley asked Ms. Clipperton if he needs to make a motion to have something added as part of the record. Attorney Iacofano advised that they be added by a motion, a second, and approval of the Council. Council Member Kelley asked her to add in the materials he submitted for discussion on item #12 as part of the record as well as in the minute book. Ms. Clipperton responded that she recognizes his request but that the discussion didn't take place.

Motion was made by Council Member Quinn, seconded by Council Member Brookes to adjourn this meeting at approximately 8:17PM. All members unanimously agreed.

The next Regular Meeting of the Council of the Township of Rockaway is scheduled for May 25, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christina Clipperton
Municipal Clerk