

MINUTES
Council Meeting
Monday, July 13, 2009

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Council President Jasionowski called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building located at 406 Rivervale Road, River Vale, New Jersey 07675.

SALUTE TO FLAG

Council President Jasionowski asked all in attendance to rise and join him in a Salute to the Flag.

SUNSHINE LAW STATEMENT

Council President Jasionowski read the Sunshine Statement into the record, as follows:

“In accordance with the provisions set forth in the Open Public Meetings Law, notification of this meeting has been sent to all officially appointed Township newspapers and notice is posted at the Municipal Office.”

ROLL CALL

Councilman de Stefan, Councilman Bromberg, and Councilwoman Sieg, and Council President Jasionowski were present. Councilman Matos was absent.

Also present: Mayor Joseph Blundo, Robert Gallione, Business Administrator, Holly Schepisi, Township Attorney, Gennaro Rotella, CFO, and Antonios Panagopoulos, Township Engineer.

TOWNSHIP COMMUNICATION

1. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Blundo opened with comments regarding the recent storm damage and thanked the DPW for their round-the-clock clean up efforts. One home was destroyed and several others sustained damage.

The Mayor reported that he spoke to Commissioner Joseph Doria of the DCA and he verbally granted the Township the Green Acres funding to purchase I6A. Mayor explained that he would like to see this in writing and noted that their attorneys will be getting in touch with Holly. In addition to the Green Acres funds there will be a County grant to purchase I6A.

Mayor Blundo also commented on the issue being driven by Woodcliff Lake to unravel the High School District. The Mayor is strongly opposed to any movement by both Woodcliff Lake and Montvale to unwrap the district as it stands. The current funding formula favors Hillsdale, Montvale and River Vale are more interchangeable and Woodcliff Lake contributes significantly more per student than Hillsdale and substantially more than Montvale and River Vale. The Mayor noted that for many years it was reversed and the other towns paid a greater burden and therefore the new funding formula was created.

The Mayor continued that Woodcliff Lake allegedly has a study that the Township Clerk requested and was denied because it was in a draft form. Mayor Blundo stated that he feels this is absurd and egregious. Mayor Blundo continued that the Mayor of Woodcliff Lake is basing an opinion on a document that they claim is a draft. Woodcliff Lake commissioned and paid for this study that not surprisingly recommends unwinding the district and then refuses to share with Hillsdale or River Vale who are both interested parties. Mayor Blundo added that Township has made an official OPRA request for the document.

Mayor Blundo added that if this comes to be we will study our options and that perhaps other solutions are worth looking into. The Mayor stated that we're not going to fight without independently looking at what the various options could be. He continued that short of a neutral report showing a significant advantage to River Vale if the district unwinds he would fight the

unwinding because it goes against everything State, County and other agencies are looking to accomplish.

Mayor Blundo concluded his comments by announcing that River Vale was named in *CNN Money Magazine* as one of the top 500 best places to live. River Vale is a great place to live because of the people, the schools, the proximity to New York and all the organizations that contribute to make our community. Mayor Blundo is very proud to live here.

2. Council Comments

Councilman de Stefan commented that he stands behind the Mayor with regard to preserving our High School. Councilman de Stefan recalled that River Vale has paid their fair share over the years. He concluded that the Road Program is complete and he's received many compliments from residents.

Councilwoman Sieg had no comments.

Councilman Bromberg echoed Councilman de Stefan's words and supports the Mayor with regard to the High School. He continued that with respect to our ranking as a great town to live in. He agreed whole heartedly with the Mayor that the most important thing is the people.

Councilman Bromberg commended and thanked both the DPW and Fire Department for their response during a recent storm.

Councilman Bromberg concluded his report by commending the River Vale Police Department on the investigation and arrests of a trio of scam artists that were hitting neighborhoods in town.

Council President Jasionowski thanked the EMS, DPW and the administration on their response during and after a recent storm. Council President Jasionowski was also very impressed by the response of the residents who helped the people who were hardest hit. The residents helped salvage items; they also offered places to stay and donations to those affected by the storm.

Business Administrator's Report

The Business Administrator reported on the over whelming response he has received with regard to the Town's request for a Blue Spruce to have as our holiday tree. He also commented on River Vale's ranking in *CNN Money* magazine.

Mr. Gallione gave an update on the status of the next newsletter. He would like to continue featuring department heads and would like to feature Rich Campanelli, DPW Superintendent and Denis McGuire our Tax Assessor.

The Business Administrator offered a brief report on the status of the renovations to the Bike Path.

Councilman de Stefan requested clarification with regard to the (2) month delay of the hospital hearing.

Mayor Blundo added that Hackensack Hospital has requested a delay in the hearing with regard to the reopening of Pascack Valley. The Mayor continued that this is a tactical move and probably be held in November. He also remarked on Assemblyman Johnson's comments in *The Record* and how he has lobbied the Governor. The Pascack Valley Mayor's Association will be meeting with the Editorial Board of *The Record* to counter that position. Mayor Blundo added that the Westwood Mayor has prepared a response to the remarks of Assemblyman Johnson. In addition, there will be a joint response from the Mayors sent directly to the Governor.

The Business Administrator concluded his remarks by announcing that resident John Greco had very generously donated the fireworks for the National Night Out event.

Township Engineer's Report

The Township Engineer reported on completion of the ADA ramps on Rivervale Road. Unfortunately, the Holdrum field renovations are ongoing. The schedule for the week is to screen the soil, complete the irrigation system and have the sod laid by this Saturday. The plan is to have it complete by Saturday assuming the weather is good.

The Engineer continued that Mark Land Basketball Court Lighting project is set for a final electrical inspection this week. The Hillsdale residents have been notified regarding the Bernita Drive Headwall Replacement project.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

Motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilman de Stefan to open the meeting to the public.

Council President Jasionowski read the following statement into the record.

"Each person wishing to address the Council shall step up to the microphone, shall give his or her name in an audible tone for the record. All member of the public are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner. Any derogatory, abusive or threatening statements will not be permitted. The Chair will immediately rule such conduct out of order and terminate any further comments."

Joe Massin - 68 Holiday Court – commented on the dismantling of the High School district. Mr. Massin stressed that the legislature should be dealing with reform of the formulas because they are antiquated. He is concerned that if the dismantling is successful it would be chaos and set precedence. Mr. Massin had additional comments on wind turbines.

Paul Greco – 243 Collignon Way – commended the current Mayor and Council for doing a fine job. He also commented on the lost tax revenue from the golf course. Mr. Greco also thanked the DPW and Police Department for doing a good job on the recent clean up.

Mr. Greco also commented on running a commercial business in town and the number of parking spaces available. In particular, he questioned why Reubens was denied tables and seating due to the lack of adequate parking. The Mayor explained the reasoning behind why the owner's request for 50 seats was initially denied. Mayor Blundo continued that the owner has repititioned for 24 seats and has since been approved.

Mr. Greco also questioned whether Dunkin Donuts would be required to close at 12:00 due to a recent ordinance change.

Both Council President Jasionowski and Township Attorney Holly Schepisi stated that this was completely untrue. They explained that Dunkin Donuts has an existing use variance already as well as being grand fathered in.

The Mayor feels for the local business however we don't to change the character of the town because of the economic times.

Jim Hanna – 381 Sunset Road –has made no progress with the History Channel with regard to the USS Enterprise. Mr. Hanna also expressed his concerns regarding the sinking of Rivervale Road near Edgewood County Club and fears it may collapse.

The Business Administrator has been in touch with the County and they have submitted plans.

Mr. Hanna also urged the Council to revisit the Master Plan because he feels there are problems.

Mayor Blundo stated that the Master Plan is not due for an update but he does feel there are some very specifics items that need to be addressed.

Mr. Hanna also questioned why the Red & Tan bus line discontinued their service in River Vale. Mayor Blundo answered that the Red & Tan Line discontinued due to it not being profitable.

Paul Garfinkel – 754 Tiffany Avenue – wanted to officially thank and commend the individuals that were extremely helpful to family whose home was destroyed during the recent storm. Mr. Garfinkel thanked Township Attorney Holly Schepisi, Mike Sartori, Rich Campanelli, Glen

Jasionowski and Chief McCann. Mr. Garfinkel continued with grateful thanks to residents Robert Adamo and Rob Smoldon who both donated their time and equipment to assist the family. He added that there were dozens of friends and neighbors that offered their help.

There being no further questions or comments from the public; motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilwoman Sieg to close the meeting to the public.

RESOLUTIONS

Motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilman de Stefan to approve Resolution #2009-172, as amended:

Resolution #2009-172

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE June 8, 2009 COUNCIL MEETING

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the minutes of the June 8, 2009 Council meeting are hereby approved.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman de Stefan, Councilman Bromberg, and Councilwoman Sieg voted yes. Council President Jasionowski abstained and Council Matos was absent.

Motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilwoman Sieg to approve Resolutions #2009-173 through #2009-177, as follows:

Resolution #2009-173

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A CHANGE FUND FOR PET LICENSES

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Treasurer is hereby authorized to provide a \$ 50.00 Change Fund for Pet Licenses and that said fund will be administered by the Township Clerk.

Resolution #2009-174

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FIREWORKS PERMIT FOR THE NATIONAL NIGHT OUT EVENT– AUGUST 4, 2009

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the fireworks permit for the above mentioned is hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all permit fees to the Township of River Vale have been waived; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Fire Official has received all pertinent applications and approvals according to Township Ordinances and Statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Resolution #2009-175

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN FIRE WORKS CONTRACT WITH GARDEN STATE FIREWORKS, INC. FOR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT – AUGUST 4, 2009

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Mayor is hereby authorized to sign a contract with Garden State Fireworks, Inc. for the National Night Out event on August 4, 2009.

Resolution #2009-176

RESOLUTION APPROVING LEAF DISPOSAL SHARED SERVICES PROJECT (PVCPS)

WHEREAS, the Township of River Vale and its (9) sister communities in the Pascack Valley are committed to exploring ways to share services that will save the taxpayers' money while improving the services delivered; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendents of Public Works and Administrators of the communities in the Pascack Valley have identified leaf collection and disposal as one of the largest costs for each of our communities; and

WHEREAS, a joint solution for the collection and disposal of leaves has been identified and is now in the process of being verified as saving time, resources, fuel and taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, on June 12th a subcommittee of the Pascack Valley Administrators and Superintendents of Public Works met with representatives of Waste Management, Inc. as well as representative of the Pascack Valley Mayor's Association to explore the possibility of bringing leaves to transfer stations located in the Borough of Hillsdale and Park Ridge; and

WHEREAS, Waste Management has the capacity to accept, compact and transport leaves to environmentally accredited facilities at a cost which appears to be significantly less than municipalities are currently paying; and

WHEREAS, all municipalities in the Pascack Valley have been asked to submit data on their leaf collection costs to verify actual costs and calculate potential savings, and

WHEREAS, the Pascack Valley Superintendents of Public Works and Administrators wish to have this program in place for the fall of 2009 so that all communities can reduce the cost of leaf collection this year; and

WHEREAS, each municipality in the Pascack Valley will be asked to pass a resolution in favor of this concept; and

WHEREAS, to implement this solution, the assistance of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as well as the State representatives from our District must be contacted and asked for assistance; and

WHEREAS, the assistance required is to obtain a Type 23 permit for Waste Management Hillsdale facility. This permit will allow leaves to be accepted and put on even footing with the Park Ridge facility which already has the Type 23 permit; and

WHEREAS, the communities of the Pascack Valley are asking the State of New Jersey to authorize a three-year pilot program so that empirical data can be presented to the DEP and other state officials which will show the true cost and savings of this project; and

WHEREAS, this project could be a role model for other communities across the State thereby saving tens of millions of dollars for the taxpayers of the State of New Jersey.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale supports the shared services leaf collection and disposal effort now being explored; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governing Body applauds the efforts of the Superintendents of Public Works and Administrators for this initiative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to all communities in the Pascack Valley as well as the County Executive, the Pascack Valley Mayors Association and the elected representatives of District 39.

Resolution #2009-177

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BUILDER’S ESCROW REFUND

WHEREAS, the following individuals have posted Escrow Deposits as requested by both the Planning and Zoning Boards; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Boards have determined these projects complete;

NOW, THEREFORE BE, IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Escrow Deposits be released;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Township of the Township of River Vale that the Chief Financial Officer be directed to release the Escrow Deposits of the attached list of individuals.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman de Stefan, Councilman Bromberg, Councilwoman Sieg and Council President Jasionowski voted yes. Councilman Matos was absent

THERE WERE NO ORDINANCES FOR 1ST OR 2ND READING

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

Motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilman de Stefan to open the meeting to the public.

H.T. Stempel - 558 Westwood Avenue- thanked PSE&G for their help during a recent power outage he experienced. Mr. Stempel commented on the real estate sign ordinance. In the past he has campaigned against the posting of temporary signs. Mr. Stempel feels that these signs benefit the realtors and he is concerned that the Town may allow a commercial business to post a sign on his property. Mr. Stempel finds this offensive; he does not live in a commercial zone. In addition people with home business are not permitted to put signs out. He feels this ordinance will open the door to additional requests to put up signs.

Council President Jasionowski and Mayor Blundo thanked Mr. Stempel for his comments. The Mayor stressed maintaining the character of the town.

There being no further questions or comments from the public; motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilman de Stefan to close the meeting to the public.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Bromberg; seconded by Councilman de Stefan to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.

Council President
Glen Jasionowski

ATTEST:
Karen Padva
Township Clerk