

**Borough of Paramus  
Mayor and Council Public Meeting  
Council Chambers  
March 22, 2022 6:30 PM  
MINUTES**

**Resolution No: 22-03-198:** Notification of meetings as required by “The Open Public Meetings Act.” Read by the Borough Clerk at 6:33 PM

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** led by Chief Ehrenberg & Deputy Chief Guidetti

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilwoman Weber, Mayor LaBarbiera

Also Present: Borough Clerk Annemarie Krusznis, Borough Attorney Brian Giblin, Giblin & Gannaio Firm Associate Brian Giblin, Jr., Deputy Borough Clerk Nicolette Riggi

Absent: None

**Proclamation:** Supporting the “UDrive. UText. UPay.” Distracted Driving 2022 Crackdown – read by Mayor LaBarbiera at 6:34 PM

**PRESENTATION:**

- a. Chief Ehrenberg & Deputy Chief Robert Guidetti– certificates for dispatchers

Chief Ehrenberg gives a brief history of the duties of Paramus Dispatchers. Mr. Ehrenberg discusses the work involving Hurricane Ida in September of 2021. The 911 Dispatchers stepped up and handled the high volume of calls received in 24 hours. Deputy Chief Guidetti presents an award to Eric Picone for his work in communications. Awards are distributed to dispatchers.

**BOROUGH CLERK’S REPORT:**

- b. Request received from LEAD for permission to hold a LEAD Fest carnival at Garden State Plaza from May 26 through June 12, 2022. **Approved.**
- c. Request received from the Environmental Commission for permission to hang a banner, beginning April 18, 2022 on Farview Avenue to promote their Earth Day celebration on April 30, 2022. **Approved.**

**Mayor LaBarbiera appoints Tom Caiaffa to the Environmental Commission.**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS REPORTS:**

Councilwoman Bellinger The Clean Up event is coming up on April 23<sup>rd</sup> – pre-registration is required. The Environmental Commission has an Instagram page and Facebook page. Earth day is Saturday April 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Styrofoam drive at the High School during that time as well. The Children’s Library Addition bids were opened on March 8<sup>th</sup> and bids came in within the budget. Ikea has pledged \$50,000 in furniture. The Library has requested a timeline extension for the project with a completion date of May, 2023. To celebrate the Borough’s centennial, the next

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Mayor & Council meeting will be held at the Reid Branch Library which was the original borough hall. The Library is expanding on more in person programs in April of this year.

Councilman Antonio – met with Shade Tree this weekend and the new grinder was used. They're working hard to get mulch and is it for the borough. Rescue installed Chief Pecoraro. Board of Education met and will be presenting its annual budget.

Councilman Kaiser All recreation fields are open and ready for spring. The inspections went well. The Easter Bunny will be visiting on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at Petruska Park.

Councilman DiPiazza Gives tentative dates for the summer concert series. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee will be meeting and an update will be given at the next Council meeting.

Councilwoman Weber Shade Tree has been transferring wood chips into mulch which is a big money saver for the borough. Routine tree trimming will be starting. The Health Department donated \$230 to the American Heart Association. Masks are now optional on school property and in school vehicles. The trends are still frequently reviewed. Rabies vaccine will be in May. DPW pothole repairs are ongoing. The road division will be clearing streams and brooks as needed. A list of roads to be paved will be available shortly. Ms. Weber reads a letter from Guy Picone whose retirement will begin shortly.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor LaBarbiera congratulates and recognizes three wrestlers from Paramus including Councilman Kaiser's son. Best wishes to all three. The Century Road bridge is almost complete. Paramus is trying to beat the world record of the amount of socks donated which will require 40,000 pairs. Mayor LaBarbiera urges everyone to contribute if they can.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** New administrator Hector Olmo reports that he met with all department heads to get an idea of what their departments are working on and to discuss their capital needs. Alaimo is preparing a proposal to address the needed pump stations. The engineer is also working on a proposal for sewer breaks on Route 17. Mr. Olmo met with Alaimo and Boswell Engineers and came up with how to transition from Boswell to Alaimo. The DPW Complex expansion project had to be reevaluated and they came up with a clear span building. The restructuring of the DPW has been discussed. Mr. Picone's position will be posted internally to try & fill as soon as possible. Cyber Security was at a Tier 2 and there are three tiers. For the Open Space grant we need a project to apply for. Megan from Recreation was contacted regarding this. There was a request from Crown Castle who is looking to put a cell tower on Soldier Hill Road off a piece of property owned by the Borough. Mr. Olmo inquires on if the Council is interested in pursuing this. Mayor LaBarbiera responds about past concerns. The council discusses the proposed area which is behind Adler Way near Reid Park. Mayor LaBarbiera advises that there are residential homes there.

Mayor LaBarbiera advises that pump stations are essential to infrastructure and it's very important to invest in them.

Tax Assessor Jim Anzevino is present to answer questions residents may have about assessments. Mr. Anzevino briefly describes the annual reassessment process. Mr. Anzevino

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advises that out of almost 50 neighborhoods, only 5 neighborhoods saw an increase. Last year interest rates were low and people were coming to the suburbs from New York City. The values of homes went through the roof. Commercial properties were closing, but are now starting to re-open. Agreements were worked out with the malls. There is low exposure. There will be commercial appeals but there may not be many residential appeals. The most important thing is that value went up. If there was an increase, there is a reason for it. For example, some people did projects on their homes like adding a bathroom or adding a level. We're on the road to recovery after what we experienced with closures.

Michelle Doris – inquires about how often assessments are traditionally done. Mr. Anzevino explains that the borough is doing a rolling reassessment and describes how this process works. Mr. Anzevino explains that houses in Paramus are worth more now than they were three years ago even if they are in worse shape. Mr. DiPiazza asks Mr. Anzevino to explain the formula that helps them come up with the assessment.

Nick Matahen – asks about the percentage of homes assessed each year and if the percentage changes. Mr. Anzevino explains. Mr. Matahen points out that the situation the last couple of years were unprecedented and that's the reason for the trend. He wants to know if the revaluation will be held to see what the market will look like in another year of 2. Mr. Anzevino explains that staying on top of it is beneficial.

David ? – inquires about how often the assessment will be done after 2024, if the year happens to be a good one and the borough doesn't continue with this program. Councilwoman Bellinger explains that with the amount of commercial properties, the borough needs to continue to reassess because of the appeals. One of the purposes of the rolling reassessment is to build a firewall against tax appeals, which protects the residents.

Stacy Sheridan – advises that the residents like transparency and most of them don't know all this information regarding taxes. Mayor LaBarbiera advises that every meeting is public and this is the first meeting in around 5 years where more than 5 residents have attended. The transparency is here if the residents want to attend. Ms. Sheridan states that she is not placing blame.

David ? – inquires if the Council has the ability to tax the residential different than commercial. Mr. Anzevino explains why this can't be done.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Citizens are welcome to address the Mayor and Council on any governmental item of concern to them, whether or not it is scheduled on the agenda. Comments will be made at the public portion of tonight's Public Meeting in the Council Chambers. 7:34 PM

Grace Parisi – Ms. Parisi is disgusted with the tree removal of the ash trees. She has been calling Shade Tree for 3 years with no success. The dead trees are leaving debris and the town won't clean it up or take responsibility. Ms. Parisi feels completely ignored. In November, 2021 the tree branches were cut to leave unsightly stumps that are 15 feet. She was told the town doesn't have

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the equipment to remove the trunks and it wasn't in the budget. Ms. Parisi maintains her property and is tired of being told she has to wait. The property is losing value. There is a constant stream of water in front of her driveway and the town says it's not their problem. Ms. Parisi speaks on the potential cell tower that would be in her backyard and would ruin Reid Park. Mayor LaBarbiera apologizes to Ms. Parisi for her treatment by representatives of the town. The behavior is inexcusable and the Administrator will get started on this tomorrow. Mayor LaBarbiera advises that Shade Tree's excuse regarding the budget is nonsense. The mayor clarifies that this Council did not say go ahead with the new cell tower. Mayor LaBarbiera clarifies comments made about the apartments on Soldier Hill and advises that the governing body fought as hard as possible to prevent that land being developed. The law was not in their favor.

Jane Meyers – inquires about the plan and timeline regarding the Ash tree removal.

Mary ? – also presents an issue with Shade Tree.

Mayor LaBarbiera instructs all the members of the public who have a tree complaint to approach the dais and give the Borough Administrator their contact information so he can be in touch with them.

Denny Wiggers – presents an interest in taking the stumps from the residents. He advises that there are Rabbis that use ash tree wood and Passover is beginning soon.

Councilman DiPiazza reminds the public that every member of the council is affected by the same issues as they are all town residents who've had their homes reassessed and have trees on their properties as well.

Keri Green – inquires about the Behnke Senior Housing. Ms. Green's grandmother lives there and fell during Covid & broke her hip. The key fobs given to her family members have been deactivated and didn't work. Ms. Green believes the elderly residents there need to have other sets of keys to give to their family members. Mayor LaBarbiera advises Ms. Green to contact Laura in affordable housing.

**RESOLUTION No. 22-03-199:** Closing the meeting of the Mayor and Council to the public. 8:08 PM

**d. Litigation**

**e. Personnel**

Motion: Councilman Antonio

Second: Councilman DiPiazza

Yeas: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilwoman Weber

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**Motion carries 5-0**

Open 8:56 PM

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The Council discusses potentially moving the parks maintenance from Recreation back to Shade Tree. Mayor LaBarbiera warns against doing that.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- f. Mayor and Council Reorganization Meeting Minutes- January 2, 2022

Motion: Councilwoman Weber

Second: Councilman DiPiazza

Yeas: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilwoman Weber

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**Motion carries 5-0**

- g. Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes- January 19, 2022

Motion: Councilwoman Weber

Second: Councilman DiPiazza

Yeas: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger, Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilwoman Weber

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**Motion carries 5-0**

**ORDINANCES:**

**ORDINANCE ON FINAL:**

**ORDINANCE 2022-10:** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A460 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF PARAMUS TITLED "FEES" IN TOWN FIELD RENTAL

Motion: Councilwoman Weber

Second: Councilman DiPiazza

Open to Public for Comment – None

Explanation by Council President

Yeas: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilwoman Weber

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**Motion carries 5-0**

Councilman DiPiazza would like all items on non-consent to be moved to consent except for 22-02-145.

Tabled Resolutions No's 22-02-109, 22-02-145 and 22-02-149 taken off table for consideration

Motion: Councilman DiPiazza

Second: Councilwoman Weber

Yeas: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilwoman Weber

Nays: None

Abstain: None

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Absent: None  
Motion carries 5-0

**A CONSENT AGENDA WILL BE ADOPTED FOR ITEM NUMBERS 16 AND 17**

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-109: TABLED 2/8/2022-** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COMMERCIAL TAX APPEAL ATTORNEY TO SETTLE 2020 AND 2021 TAX APPEAL CAPTIONED: Marks Realty, LLC A. Marks v. Borough of Paramus Docket Nos. 009381-2020 and 008761-2021

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-145: TABLED 2/22/2022-** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR RECREATION VEHICLES

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-149: TABLED 2/22/2022-** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF THE 2022 REMOVAL OF GRASS, LEAVES AND BRUSH BID

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-200:** AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-201:** TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATION RESERVES

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-202:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF TREE PRESERVATION DEPOSIT FROM SHADE TREE ESCROW ACCOUNT T-22-56-286-850-802 TO THE FOLLOWING AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE SHADE TREE & PARKS COMMISSION (Appelbaum)

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-203:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF TREE PRESERVATION DEPOSIT FROM SHADE TREE ESCROW ACCOUNT T-22-56-286-850-802 TO THE FOLLOWING AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE SHADE TREE & PARKS COMMISSION (Wanat)

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-204:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF TREE PRESERVATION DEPOSIT FROM SHADE TREE ESCROW ACCOUNT T-22-56-286-850-802 TO THE FOLLOWING AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE SHADE TREE & PARKS COMMISSION (RGM Builders)

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-205:** APPOINTING A FUND COMMISSIONER TO REPRESENT THE BOROUGH OF PARAMUS IN THE NJ MUNICIPAL SELF INSURERS' JOINT INSURANCE FUND

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-206:** BERGEN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 2022 CARES ACT PROJECT ENDORSING RESOLUTION

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-207:** RESOLUTION TO ENTER A GRANT AGREEMENT FOR FY21 BERGEN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

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**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-208:** RESOLUTION AMENDING SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR AS NEEDED CERTIFIED PUBLIC WORKS MANAGER DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND FOR EQUIPMENT, VEHICLES AND MANPOWER FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH HACKENSACK

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-209:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF MUNICIPAL PERSONAL PROPERTY NO LONGER NEEDED FOR PUBLIC USE ON AN ONLINE AUCTION WEBSITE

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-210:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH CLERK TO ADVERTISE REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS FOR UTILITY & TELECOM BILL AUDITING SERVICES

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-211:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SICK TIME PAYOUT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,192.75 TO VIRGINIA CAPASSO

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-212:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF CAMILLA KOC TO THE POSITION OF PAGE FOR THE PARAMUS LIBRARY AT A SALARY OF \$13.00 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-213:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF PRINCE PATEL TO THE POSITION OF PAGE FOR THE PARAMUS LIBRARY AT A SALARY OF \$13.00 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-214:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF JOEL A. TORRES TO THE POSITION OF EMT FOR THE PARAMUS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AT A SALARY OF \$20.00 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-215:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF COLE HAMON TO THE POSITION OF CASHIER-SEASONAL STEP 1 FOR THE PARAMUS GOLF COURSE AT A SALARY OF \$13.00 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-216:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE STEP-UP OF SERGIO A. ARROYO TO EMT STEP 1 FOR THE PARAMUS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AT A SALARY OF \$21.33 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-217:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE STEP-UP OF ANNETTA A. PANAYIDES TO EMT STEP 2 FOR THE PARAMUS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AT A SALARY OF \$22.62 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-218:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE STEP-UP OF ISRAEL BEATO TO EMT STEP 1 FOR THE PARAMUS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AT A SALARY OF \$21.33 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-219:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RETIREMENT OF LORNA PETOUVIS FROM THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT TO DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION FOR THE PARAMUS PUBLIC LIBRARY

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-220:** RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING THE RESIGNATION OF JAMES J. TAORMINA FROM THE POSITION OF EMT FOR THE PARAMUS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

**RESOLUTION NO 22-03-221:** RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING THE RESIGNATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF THE PARAMUS FIRE DEPARTMENT

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-109:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COMMERCIAL TAX APPEAL ATTORNEY TO SETTLE 2020 AND 2021 TAX APPEAL CAPTIONED: Marks Realty, LLC A. Marks v. Borough of Paramus Docket Nos. 009381-2020 and 008761-2021

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**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-145:** - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR RECREATION VEHICLES

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-149:** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF THE 2022 REMOVAL OF GRASS, LEAVES AND BRUSH BID

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-222:** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF RICHARD ABBAMONT TO THE POSITION OF PART TIME PISTOL RANGE MAINTAINER STEP 7 FOR THE PARAMUS POLICE DEPARTMENT TRAINING DIVISION AT A SALARY OF \$21.50 PER HOUR

**RESOLUTION 22-02-223:** RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION 22-01-24 APPOINTING SAFETY DELEGATES FOR THE JOINT INSURANCE FUND

**RESOLUTION NO 22-02-224:** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BERGEN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REGIONAL COMMITTEE

**APPLICATIONS:**

**RAFFLE**

Stony Lane Elementary School PTA	File # 860
Stony Lane Elementary School PTA	File # 861
St. Athanasios Greek Orthodox Church	File # 862
Spring Valley Fire Co of The Borough of Paramus	File # 863
Volunteer Center of Bergen County	File # 864

**Approve Consent Agenda as Amended**

Motion: Councilwoman Weber

Second: Councilman Kaiser

Yeas: Councilman Antonio, Councilwoman Bellinger Councilman DiPiazza, Councilman Kaiser, Councilman Vartolone, Councilwoman Weber

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent:

**Motion carries 5-0**

Open to Public – None

**ADJOURNMENT: 9:09 PM**

APPROVED: MAY 10, 2022

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:  
ANNEMARIE KRUSZNIS RMC  
BOROUGH CLERK