

Approved at April 14, 2010 Council Meeting

BOROUGH OF RAMSEY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 24, 2010

Mayor Botta called the regular meeting of the Mayor and Council to order. Council President led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor read the Open Public Meetings law notice.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Botta, Councilmembers Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozech, Borough Attorney Peter Scandariato, Borough Administrator Nicholas Saros, and Borough Clerk Meredith Bendian.

Absent: None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Jones, seconded by Jachzel, to approve the minutes of March 10, 2010, as submitted. Carried.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Motion by Nalbandian, seconded by Vozech, to receive and file the following Communications. Carried.

1. [Angela Stollo, Ramsey Green Team Member](#)
memo dated March 16, 2010, requesting input for their Sustainable Land Use Pledge for their certification program.
2. [Senator Gerald Cardinale, 350 Madison Avenue, Cresskill, NJ 07446](#)
letter dated March 16, 2010, informing of the bill that he is reintroducing allowing municipalities to advertise on the internet and save money on newspaper publications.
3. [Senator Gerald Cardinale, 350 Madison Avenue, Cresskill, NJ 07446](#)
letter dated March 23, 2010, listing reasons to encourage your community to participate in filling out the census forms and asking that it be posted on the community bulletin board.

Mayor Botta stated that Planning and Zoning Committee would review Letter #1 regarding the Sustainable Land Use Pledge, for a recommendation back to the Council.

Motion by Nalbandian, seconded by Vozech, to go out of the normal order of business. Carried. Mayor Botta asked Chris Keosayian, member of Boy Scout Troop 31, to give a description of the proposed Eagle Scout project. Chris explained that he is planning a permanent structure at the boccie court to provide shelter from sun and rain. There would be two pavilions, one on either

end of the courts, and they would be permanent structures. The way it is now pop tents have to be set up and the tents easily blow over with a little wind. This would help maximize the use of the court. Chris stated that he is working with Todd Zecher of Ramsey Building Materials, as well as Home Depot, to get donations for this project. Mayor Botta asked about the time frame and Chris stated that he would like to start at the end of April, and it should take six to seven days. Chris added that he would have a crew of additional boy scouts assisting him. Councilman Jachzel stated that the seniors would greatly appreciate this project. Borough Administrator added that Chris has been in contact with Bob Connell for construction approval. Mayor Botta expressed his appreciation to Chris and stated that we look forward to having this addition to the bocce court.

IV. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Botta made the following appointments:

William Emmer, Board of Public Works

Jacob Kossowsky, Ramsey Volunteer Fire Department

V. CONSENT RESOLUTION

Introduced by Vozech, seconded by Siemsen

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:

- | | | |
|----------|-------------|---|
| 072-2010 | Resolution: | Payment of bills |
| 073-2010 | Resolution: | Authorizing the award of contract to John Garcia in case of emergency water and sewer repairs |
| 074-2010 | Resolution: | Reserve Transfer Resolution No. 3 |
| 075-2010 | Resolution: | Confirming the appointment of William Emmer to the Board of Public Works |
| 076-2010 | Resolution: | Confirming the appointment of Jacob Kossowsky to the Ramsey Volunteer Fire Department |
| 077-2010 | Resolution: | Authorizing supplementing and updating the Borough code and the purchase of additional copies of code books by General Code in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 |
| 078-2010 | Resolution: | Designating March 31st as Family Night – Ready, Set, Relax, in the Borough of Ramsey |

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

- A. SPECIAL PERMITS:
[St. Paul Interparochial School is requesting permission to hang banners advertising](#) the carnival. They want to hang banners at the tennis courts, police station and Brady's from May 7, 2010- May 23, 2010.
- B. BLOCK PARTY REQUESTS:
[Cay Franck of Morton Drive is requesting permission to hold a block party](#) on Saturday, June 5, 2010 between the hours of 3pm and 10pm

AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozech NAYS: None

VI. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

- A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION -Councilman Bruce Vozech
I would like to formally thank Boy Scout Chris Keosayian for his proposed Eagle Scout project at the bocce courts. The senior citizens will certainly appreciate it. Also, my thanks to the new volunteers who were appointed tonight. The registration for the Ramsey Pool is open, and there is an early-bird discount. Also, people from other communities will be allowed to join, if they are sponsored by Ramsey residents. We are losing a substantial amount of municipal aid and we are down in our 2010 budget. Governor Christie was in Ramsey today and he spoke about the tough decisions we are going to have to make, both in the educational side and the municipal side. It is difficult news and whether we like it or not, they are not good choices. I think the Governor spent a lot time and I thank him for addressing the issues.
- B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Councilman William Jones
I would like to thank Chris Keosayian for a very worthy project. I welcome the new volunteers. The annual clean-up day is April 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be staging areas at the Ramsey Rescue Squad and if you want to participate, you can go there and find out where to be assigned. Also, Robert Lichult died. Mr. Lichult was a member of the Ramsey Fire Department for 70 years and I wish to offer my condolences to his family.
- C. BUILDING, PLANNING & ZONING – Councilwoman Deirdre Dillon
My thanks to Chris Keosayian for coming in tonight. His project will make a lot of people very happy. Congratulations to the new volunteers.
- D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilman Arthur Nalbandian
I too would like to extend my appreciation to Chris Keosayian for the work he will be doing to help the seniors and make our community a better place. I would like to thank the new volunteers and my condolences to the family and many friends of Robert Lichult. The work at Veterans' Park is underway and progressing well. It will be completed on time and will be a beautiful place.
- E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilwoman Vanessa Jachzel
I too would like to thank Chris Keosayian for his presentation. I also want to thank the new volunteers who were appointed tonight. Last week, the Ramsey seniors had a wonderful St. Patrick's Day lunch and we also had the ribbon cutting for the new

senior citizens' bus which was donated by the Inserra Family and dedicated to the memory of their mother, Theresa Inserra. We feel a world of gratitude to the Inserras for their unwavering support in Ramsey projects and organizations.

F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Council President Andrew Siemsen
I would like to thank Chris for his Eagle Scout project. Projects such as this give a lot of character to the town. I would also like to thank the new volunteers.

G. MAYOR CHRISTOPHER C. BOTTA

We had the privilege and honor today of having Governor Christie attend an event at the Ramsey Rescue Squad to talk about the financial situation facing the State. I think the Governor and Lieut. Gov. Kim Guadagno laid out the issues that are facing the State very clearly and stated that drastic and dramatic action has to be taken because the old way of doing things certainly has failed us and put us in this financial hole. Yes, the proposals are painful. They hit Ramsey very hard. Our municipal aid is going to drop by 23% which is the highest in the County. Our educational school aid is going to drop by \$2.19 million dollars which will have to be made up through other means. The Governor laid out a road map for how to address these matters and I think it is important that that message get out to the public. We could see a lot of this aid come back, especially on the school side if certain concessions and certain adjustments were made with some of the issues with regard to the teachers' union. The target is definitely not teachers; they do a great job but some of the hierarchy of the union leadership and the teacher's union is stalling the process and holding us back as a State from moving our financial house into better shape. While these cuts are going to be painful, I think they are necessary and I want to thank the Governor for coming to Ramsey and meeting with myself and the Council, as well as the Board of Education President and the Superintendent of Schools, to tell us why this action is necessary. I certainly hope that the residents who were there, business owners, PTO parents, public employees, police officers, senior citizens, were able to see what is going on in our state and hopefully we can all work together.

H. BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Peter A. Scandariato, Esq. No comments.

I. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Nicholas C. Saros

My condolences to the Litchult Family. Bob was a long-time member of the Volunteer Fire Department.

J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian No comments.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Allan Braggin, 25 Franklin Street, asked about the addendum for \$1100 for a wheelchair access to the tennis courts and I see that it has not been accomplished. Borough Administrator stated the project is under review by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. Mr. Braggin stated that this amount was previously approved as an addendum to the contract for the sidewalks that were done on the swimming pool side. Borough Administrator stated that we will take a look at the addendum. Mr. Braggin asked about resolution 073-2010 in tonight's consent resolution.

Mayor Botta stated that this is a general contractor for emergency repairs on a water main break when we do not have time to go out for bids. Under State law, emergency repairs can be done without bidding. Borough Administrator added that most of the residential street repairs are made by our own DPW, but in major areas where there is concrete involved, we do not have the equipment nor the expertise to make such repairs. Mr. Braggin stated that he wholly supports Governor Christie in his efforts to bring our State back into order. Unfortunately, this will affect our community to a certain extent. The reduction to our community is \$600,000 and we have 20% reduction from the State and \$2.2 million reduction to our school system. That is the negative effect of what the Governor is doing. We always see in the papers that we are managing our debt very well so our taxes go up by less than 2%. We never see anything with regard to what the revenue increases are that we bring into the community from new construction, new houses, new offices, new retail shops, etc. Borough Administrator stated that is always a component of the budget; it is called Added Assessments. We are 99% developed; years ago we would add about \$40 million each year in added ratables and now we are down to \$10-\$14 million in ratables. Basically, there isn't much property left to develop. We do have re-development going on along Route 17 and also some re-development in certain areas of the town with rehab of homes. Over the last 10 years, we projected that our ratable base would not be growing, such as Mahwah or other towns that have open space. Ramsey's growth is very limited and it certainly will be at that level for the next several years. Mr. Braggin stated that if the community is 99% developed, the increase would only be the fixed costs of salaries, benefits, etc., and not any additional added services. We should be able to get a handle on what our costs will be, once the census comes out. Borough Administrator stated that we have made a very concerted effort to reduce our debt and we do not have any permanent bonds right now. We have short-term debt, but we are in a very enviable position since we are one of the few communities that have no long-term outstanding bonds. We always projected that there will come a time when we need to go out and do some bonding at different times for continued projects, but we have paid all that down on a cash-as-you-go basis for capital projects in the last 20 years. Borough Administrator stated that added ratables will be minimum, \$10-\$15 million for at least the next 5 years. Councilman Vozech stated that our construction fees are down. There is very little increase. Mayor Botta added that that does not mean there is \$10 million in our coffers. Mr. Braggin asked about the negative effect from the decreases by the State, and the reasons for this negative effect. Mayor indicated that he did not want to speculate but we have been told there is a formula put together based upon various factors that pulled out numbers based upon debt, surplus levels, etc. It is a little discouraging but we have done things right and try to move forward and yet we are being hit hard. Borough Administrator added that there are two components to State aid: one is the energy tax and the other is comptra which is state aid from the State. Basically, they took away our comptra and they reduced our energy tax. It was called Gross Receipts Franchise Tax and now it is called Energy Aid. Mayor added that there are other communities which also received a 23% reduction. We were not the only one. Borough Administrator stated that this year our energy tax went down from \$1,839 to \$1,434. The other was the consolidated municipal property tax relief aid which was \$87,000, down to \$39,000. Mr. Braggin added that he is very proud of the overhaul project being done at Veterans' Park.

Louis Moccio, 56 Meadowbrook Road, asked about the street repairs for Meadowbrook. Councilman Nalbandian stated that we are enlisting the assistance of United Water in determining what may be some sort of underground water issue. This is my lay person's opinion. It may be a leak underground or a drainage pipe, before we go out and pave the road. I can tell you that your street is definitely a disaster and it needs to be remedied. We just want to find out if there is

a problem underground. Borough Administrator Saros is meeting with United Water and Creamer Construction tomorrow. Mr. Moccio stated that many people use Meadowbrook as a cut through street and motorists are speeding; we have been very fortunate so far, but all we need is one kid to hit a pothole.....Councilman Nalbandian stated that Mr. Saros will contact the Police Chief to add some extra traffic enforcement. Mr. Moccio stated that it is not a little quiet street, and maybe we should have a speed bump or shut the road down until we know the problem. Councilman Nalbandian stated that closing the road would not be practical at this point, but we will talk with the police. Mr. Moccio stated that his own parents do not visit because getting out of his driveway is a problem and their reactions are slow. Councilman Nalbandian stated that half of the road is in Upper Saddle River so perhaps both police departments could be contacted, to offer some assistance.

Mr. Braggin stated that the town water department contracts with specialized engineers with seismic listening devices to evaluate water leaks in the mains that are difficult to diagnosis. I would hope that United Water or Creamer Company would put these sensors down to determine if they are at least coming from the United Water main or the Ramsey main and that should have been the first thing done. Borough Administrator stated they have been probing to see if there are any leaks coming from the United Water main. There is a possibility of an older drain that might still be in that roadway and that is being investigated; right now they claim it is not a leak. The water table is high. Mr. Braggin indicated that the high water table could be the problem.

Susan (inaudible), Cambridge Heights, stated that she walks through Meadowbrook Road with a stroller and the road is very bad. The cars fly through very fast. Mayor Botta stated that we will look at stepping up enforcement, especially on a cut-through road. A lot of times, it is the same people who are using the same road.

Not seeing anyone else who wished to speak, Mayor closed the public comment.

VIII. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

[ORDINANCE NO. 03-2010 - An Ordinance amending Chapter X of the Code of the Borough of Ramsey, Bergen County, New Jersey, and more specifically Sub-Section 10-23.6 thereof entitled compensation](#)
Introduced by Vozeh, seconded by Siemsen

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER X OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SUB SECTION 10-23.6 THEREOF ENTITLED COMPENSATION RANGES having been brought up for public hearing and all persons interested having been given an opportunity to be heard, pass final reading by title, and that said ordinance be adopted as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk be, and she hereby is, directed to cause a copy of the title or said ordinance to be published in an official newspaper of the Borough in the manner provided by law, together with a notice of the date of introduction and adoption of said ordinance.

Not seeing anyone who wished to speak, Mayor closed the public hearing for ordinance 03-2010.

Councilman Vozech stated that this ordinance will lower the compensation ranges for the Judge and Prosecutor, saving approximately \$35,000 in salaries, through the consolidation of the number of court sessions.

AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozech NAYS: None

[BOND ORDINANCE NO. 04-2010 – A bond ordinance to authorize the road reconstruction and repaving of Lillian Court, Gertzen Road, Oxford Court, New England Drive, Tulip Street and portions of Morton Drive in the Borough of Ramsey, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, to appropriate the sum of \\$240,000.00 to pay the cost thereof, to make a down payment to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance, in part, such appropriation and to provide for the issuance of bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance of such bonds](#)

Introduced by Nalbandian, seconded by Vozech

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE ROAD RECONSTRUCTION AND REPAVING OF LILLIAN COURT, GERTZEN ROAD, OXFORD COURT, NEW ENGLAND DRIVE, TULIP STREET AND PORTIONS OF MORTON DRIVE IN THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, COUNTY OF BERGEN, AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$240,000.00 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWNPAYMENT TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE IN PART SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS having been brought up for public hearing and all persons interested having been given an opportunity to be heard, pass final reading by title, and that said ordinance be adopted as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey; 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 a notice of the date of introduction and adoption of said ordinance.

Allan Braggin, 25 Franklin Street, asked if the cost was based on bids. Councilman Nalbandian stated that this is part of our annual repaving program and the streets are determined by priority, based on inspection by our Borough Engineer, and review by our Utilities, Buildings and Grounds Committee. The numbers are estimates of the cost. This is going out as part of a joint bid with other Northwest Bergen County Communities. This will get a better price from bidders.

Not seeing anyone else who wished to speak about ord. 04-2010, Mayor closed the public hearing.

AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozech NAYS: None

[ORDINANCE NO. 05-2010 – An Ordinance amending Chapter VII of the Code of the Borough of Ramsey, Bergen County, New Jersey and more specifically Section 7-14 thereof entitled parking prohibited during certain hours on certain streets](#)

Introduced by Jones, seconded by Dillon

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER VII OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SECTION 7-14 THEREOF ENTITLED PARKING PROHIBITED DURING CERTAIN HOURS ON CERTAIN STREETS having been brought up for public hearing and all persons interested having been given an opportunity to be heard, pass final reading by title, and that said ordinance be adopted as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey, 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 a notice of the date of introduction and adoption of said ordinance.

Councilman Jones stated that this changes the parking restrictions around Smith School, particularly Monroe Street, as recommended by the Police Department.

Not seeing anyone else who wished to speak, Mayor closed the public hearing.

AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None..[./././Local Settings/Temporary Internet Files/Content.Outlook/Local Settings/Local Settings/Temporary Internet Files/Content.Outlook/N24S04OY/Back Up/ORDINANCE 06-2010 REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES.pdf](#)

Ord. 06-2010 An Ordinance amending Chapter II of the Code of the Borough of Ramsey, Bergen County, New Jersey and more specifically Section 2-18 Reimbursement Procedures for the Control and Clean Up of hazardous materials: Sub Section 2-78.2 reimbursable items

Introduced by Jones, seconded by Dillon

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER II OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SECTION 2-18 REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE CONTROL AND CLEAN UP OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: SUB SECTION 2-78.2 REIMBURSABLE ITEMS having been brought up for public hearing and all persons interested having been given an opportunity to be heard, pass final reading by title, and that said ordinance be adopted as an ordinance of the Borough of Ramsey; 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 a notice of the date of introduction and adoption of said ordinance.

Allan Braggin, 25 Franklin Street, stated that the fees should be doubled since these are accidents that occur and they have to be cleaned up. Councilman Jones stated that the fee schedule has been reviewed and updated by O.E.M., along with the Chiefs of the

Fire and Rescue Squads. Mayor Botta stated that we will go with the recommendations. Not seeing anyone else who wished to speak, Mayor closed the public hearing.
AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None

IX. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

[ORDINANCE 07-2010 – An ordinance amending Chapter X of the Code of the Borough of Ramsey, Bergen County, New Jersey and more specifically Section 10-36 thereof entitled Policies and Procedures on Sexual Harassment](#)

Introduced by Vozeh, seconded by Siemsen

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER X OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SECTION 10-36 THEREOF ENTITLED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT pass the first reading by title, and that said ordinance be further considered for final passage and adoption at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Council to be held on the 14th day of April, 2010, at 8:45 p.m. prevailing time or as soon after as the matter can be reached, at the Municipal Building in said Borough, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk be, and she hereby is, instructed to publish in an official newspaper of the Borough in the manner provided by law a copy of said ordinance, together with notice of introduction thereof and notice when the same will be considered for final passage and adoption.

Councilman Vozeh stated that this actually is covered by the Employee Manual and will consolidate our insurance requirements.

AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None

X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Introduced by Vozeh, seconded by Siemsen

079-2010 Resolution: Authorizing the salaries for the Judge and Prosecutor for Ramsey Municipal Court

AYES: Dillon, Jachzel, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Nalbandian, seconded by Jones, to adjourn the meeting. Carried.

Meredith Bendian

Borough Clerk