

**BOROUGH OF RAMSEY**  
**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**MARCH 14, 2007**

Acting Mayor Nalbandian called the regular meeting of the Mayor and Council to order. Councilman Vozech led the Pledge of Allegiance. Acting Mayor read the Open Public Meetings Law notice.

**I. ROLL CALL**

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

Absent: Mayor Botta (due to illness)  
Councilman Jones (business trip)

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Councilman Heller to approve the minutes of February 28, 2007, as submitted, seconded by Councilwoman Dillon. Carried.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS -**

Motion by Siemsen, seconded by Heller, to receive and file the following Communications. Carried.

1. William W. Welsh, 29 Circle End Drive, Ramsey, NJ  
letter dated February 27, 2007, regarding the completion of a sidewalk on Darlington Avenue between Elbert Street and Circle End Drive.
2. Ruth E. Barton, Corresponding Secretary, Ramsey Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, Ramsey, NJ  
letter dated March 7, 2007, requesting permission to use the train station parking lot for an outdoor flea market on Sunday, April 29, 2007.
3. Paul R. Huot, 14 Poplar Street, Ramsey, NJ  
letter dated March 7, 2007, resigning as a member of the Board of Adjustment effective April 1, 2007.
4. Colleen L. Gubala, Corresponding Secretary, Ramsey Ambulance Corps, 41 S. Island Avenue, Ramsey, NJ  
letter dated February 5, 2007, thanking the Mayor and Council for their recent donation.

5. Madeline Thumudo, Secretary, Northwest Bergen County Utilities Authority, 30 Wyckoff Avenue, Waldwick, NJ 07463 letter dated March 12, 2007, enclosing the minutes of the February 7, 2007 meeting.

Councilman Heller thanked former Mayor Huot for his service on the Board of Adjustment and added that his service to the town was exemplary.

Councilman Siemsen added that it was a pleasure to work with Judge Huot.

Acting Mayor Nalbandian stated that we accept Judge Huot's letter of resignation from the Board of Adjustment with regret. He is a real asset to the community and hopefully he will continue to be involved in various municipal activities.

#### IV. APPOINTMENTS

Kevin Reilly, Ramsey Rescue Squad – held over to next meeting when Mayor Botta will be in attendance.

#### V. CONSENT RESOLUTION

Introduced by Vozech, seconded by Dillon

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:

- a. Resolution: Payment of vouchers
- b. Resolution: Appointing Douglas Rennie and Harry Smith as the BC Community Development representatives.
- c. Resolution: Release of escrow for TGI Friday's, Block 4301, Lot 17 in the amount of \$4821.25.
- d. Resolution: Release of escrow for Carol Dorsey, Block 2101, Lot 1 in the amount of \$478.50.
- e. Resolution: Appointing Kevin Reilly to the Ramsey Rescue Squad as a Riding Member. REMOVED
- f. Resolution: Awarding a contract to Anchor Fencing for fencing at the Municipal Pool.

AA. Resolution: Awarding a contract to Drewes Inc. for the renovation to the kitchen at the Senior Citizens Center.

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

A. SPECIAL PERMITS:

Knights of Columbus are requesting permission for a social affairs permit for Saturday, March 17, 2007 between the hours of 7:00 pm and 1:00 am. (nunc pro tunc)

Knights of Columbus are requesting permission to collect funds for local charities at various locations in the borough on Friday, April 20 – Sunday, April 22, 2007.

St. Paul Interparochial School is requesting permission to hang 3 banners between May 4- May 21, 2007 advertising their annual carnival at various locations in the borough.

Ramsey Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary is requesting permission to use the train station parking lot for an outdoor flea market on Sunday, April 29, 2007.

AYES: Dillon, Heller, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh      NAYS: None      ABSENT: Jones

VI. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION -Councilman Bruce Vozech

The baseball/softball parade will be held on Saturday, April 14, at 9:00 a.m. from the high school to Finch Park. I would like to thank Judge Huot for his many years of service to the Borough. The construction at the MacFarran Fieldhouse is underway and that will be a benefit to all children. The municipal budget is underway and the Finance Committee is meeting and we will probably introduce the budget at the first meeting in April.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Council President Arthur M. Nalbandian

I would like to remind everyone about the Internet Safety Seminar scheduled for March 22 at the high school at 7:30 p.m. It is being presented by the Bergen County Prosecutor's office, Computer Crimes Unit. This is really an event you should not miss, especially if you are a parent. I understand that it is an outstanding presentation. Many thanks to Judge Huot for his service. I imagine that he will stay involved and active in town for many years to come.

- C. BUILDING & ZONING – Councilman Andrew Siemsen No comments.
- D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilman Jeffrey C. Heller  
We awarded the contract tonight for the fence around the pool that will replace the rusty fence that is currently topped with razor wire. The new fence will be 10’ high, up to current codes, and will be rubber coated. It will cover a substantial length all around the pool. I look forward to the opening of the new MacFarran Fieldhouse this Spring. I attended the Safety in Cyberspace seminar about 3 years ago and it is a dramatic amount of information. You find out what children are exposed to on the internet. There are up to 78,000 pornography sites. It is important that parents police their children on the internet. I look forward to the baseball parade.
- E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilman William Jones  
Not at this meeting.
- F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilwoman Deirdre A. Dillon  
The senior citizens St. Patrick’s Day luncheon will be on Friday, March 16, at the senior citizens center at Finch Park. I would like to thank Judge Huot for his extensive and dedicated service to Ramsey over the years.
- G. MAYOR CHRISTOPHER C. BOTTA Not at this meeting.
- H. BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Peter A. Scandariato, Esq. No comments.
- I. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Nicholas C. Saros No comments.
- J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian No comments.

## VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Brady stated that she came to submit her resignation as vice-president of the Rescue Squad as of April 15, since she will be moving. Ms. Brady stated that it was a pleasure to volunteer in this awesome town.

Acting Mayor Nalbandian wished Ms. Brady good luck in her future endeavors and stated that she has made a lot of contributions to the Rescue Squad and she will be missed.

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

VIII. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

6A-2007 Ordinance amending Chapter XIV entitled Fire Prevention and Protection

8-2007 Ordinance amending Chapter XXXIV entitled Highway Commercial District

Ord. 6A-2007 Amendment to Fire Prevention  
Introduced by Siemsen, seconded by Vozeh

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY CHAPTER XIV THEREOF ENTITLED FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION 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.

Not seeing anyone who wished to speak, Acting Mayor closed the public hearing for ord. 6A-2007.

AYES: Dillon, Heller, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None ABSENT: Jones

Ord. 8-2007 Amendment to Highway Commercial District  
Introduced by Siemsen, seconded by Heller

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER XXXIV OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SECTION 34-29 ENTITLED B-3 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT 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.

Acting Mayor opened the public comment for ordinance no. 8-2007.

Louis D'Arminio, Esq., of Price, Meese, Shulman & D'Arminio, 50 Tice Blvd., Woodcliff Lake, N.J. stated that he is also a Ramsey resident and lives on West Crescent Avenue and it is the first time he has been here. It's a beautiful place; likes to see his taxes being used well and the school looks great too. I represent Enterprise Outdoor Advertising and they have two applications pending before the Boards here. We appreciate that the governing body has attempted to meet its obligations with this ordinance. We think it does go along way, but we do have a couple of practical considerations and practical changes that we would like you to consider. If the ordinance is going to do what is intended, and I believe the intent is to allow limited billboard use only along Rt. 17, our issues with the ordinance are basically twofold; the first I guess we can group together, if you look at sections 1 and 2, they require a minimum lot area of 2 acres and construction is not permitted on a lot that has a building greater than 1500 square feet. If you think about that, two acres, I think in B-3 zone, the lot coverage is 30%, it's about that, that would be 24,000 square feet, two stories is 50,000 square feet. I mean if you had 2 acres of land along Route 17, you are not going to put a 1500 square foot building. It really does discourage the possibility of having a totally conforming application. Also, if you think about what were the reasons for that, I think the Board respectfully was trying to have adequate buffers; the end to not to overburden the site with the use. Approaching that, the State requirements for billboard spacing along a non-limited access highway require 300' of spacing. It is N.J.S.A.16:41 c.8.7 c.2. So, you have a 600 foot buffer around it, just by the State requirements. The zone itself allows for 30,000 square feet so that's a buffer, even if you went to an acre or an acre and a half. You still have adequate buffers from other signs and, since you are in an industrial zone, you have a requirement to be away from residential zones. You do have issues relating to buffers.

We tried to pull some ordinances along Rt. 17 that allow billboards. Hackensack and Lodi allow billboards along Rt. 17. I know you can say Hackensack and Lodi are not Ramsey. I am from Hackensack. When you think about it, along Rt. 17, Hackensack has a stretch that is residential. There are offices, a little part of the Pathmark, Carvel and the Crow's Nest. It has some of the same mixes of uses. If you look at Lodi, it has the armory on one side and on the northbound side it has the Home Depot and a drugstore. You have some uses that are similar to here. They really don't have a minimum building size. That is actually problematic for a totally conforming application. Of course, we could always go for variance relief. The other portion, section 6, limits the size of the sign. The sign size that you are indicating is 400 square feet. Along a highway like this, that is basically what is known in the industry as a poster panel, a little bigger than a poster panel (300 ft. is a poster panel) and it is not a size that is usually found along this type of highway. Hackensack and Lodi again allow signs that meet the requirements of the State DOT and it could be as large as 1,000 sq. ft. Quite frankly for Rt. 17, you don't need that but the next standard size that would be appropriate for a highway like Rt. 17 would be an odd number, 672 square feet. That is 14' by 48'. We would like the Board to consider that. Otherwise, it becomes a practicality issue in terms of visibility for the sign, because you are going at 55 mph so a larger sign is actually helpful and to make the investment to have a sign, certainly safety is more your concern.

Acting Mayor Nalbandian...What was the suggestion?

Mr. D'Arminio. The standard size for a billboard on Rt. 17 type of billboard is what is known as a bulletin. There are two sizes of bulletins, 20' by 50' and the smaller is 14' by 48'. That is 672 sq feet. We appreciate what the governing body has done. Actually, our northbound application would be conforming to the code. Our location is right on the border near Mahwah and it is totally surrounded by heavy industrial uses. I think that was the purpose, but we do see these as being potential problems with the ordinance and we hope the governing body would consider these changes. Thank you.

Councilman Siemsen ....I understand where Lou D'Arminio is coming from and we will obviously take those recommendations under advisement. You know, like you said, you can go in front of the Board of Adjustment in this case but these were actually recommendations, the changes to the existing ordinance, were recommendations from the Zoning Officer Rich Mammone and they were reviewed by our Planner, Betsy MacKenzie. Just to give you a background of where they came from. At this point, for the Council, I would recommend that we pass this now and leave it open for potential modification at a later date, based on the comments from Lou D'Arminio.

Acting Mayor Nalbandian...I just echo essentially what Councilman Siemsen said. We certainly do appreciate the time you took to come out here and recommend some modifications to the ordinance. Equally important is giving a little background and rationale for your recommendations. I think that is very important and not everyone does that and we do appreciate it, especially because you are a resident in town, too. I would agree with Councilman Siemsen. At this juncture, I think we should pass the ordinance as is and certainly take into consideration and review the suggestions that were made here tonight. One additional comment I would make is that the State laws cover buffers, but that is not a maximum buffer; it is a minimum buffer. However, I understand your point. Also, there is the availability of relief from any municipal zoning ordinance by way of variance. Assuming it passes, there is the ability to make an application to the appropriate agency or board and if the rationale is there for the agency or board to grant the variance, I would imagine that they would do that, but that would certainly be up to them, under the circumstances. That being said, and if there are no other comments, I would ask for a roll call vote on this ordinance.

AYES: Dillon, Heller, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozech    NAYS: None    ABSENT; Jones

9-2007      Ordinance to authorize the reconstruction and improvements to the Senior Citizens Building at Finch Park

Introduced by Dillon, seconded by Heller

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE RECONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS BUILDING LOCATED AT FINCH PARK IN THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$11,000.00 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF 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.

Councilwoman Dillon stated that the improvements will make the senior citizens building more useful and enjoyable to everyone who uses the facility.

Councilman Heller stated that this continues the improvements we started last year and is consistent with our previous plans.

Not seeing anyone who wished to speak, Acting Mayor closed the public hearing for ordinance 9-2007.

AYES: Dillon, Heller, Nalbandian, Siemsen Vozech NAYS: None ABSENT: Jones

#### IX. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

10-2007 Ordinance to authorize curb replacements to Wyckoff Avenue  
Introduced by Heller, seconded by Vozech

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE CURB REPLACEMENTS TO WYCKOFF AVENUE IN THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, COUNTY OF BERGEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$15,000.00 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF 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 28<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007, 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.

AYES: Dillon, Heller, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozech NAYS: None ABSENT: Jones

#### X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Acting Mayor Nalbandian reminded everyone that March 26 is Ready, Set, Relax night where people are requested to spend time with their families. We will not have our usual work session.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Heller stated that former Councilwoman Hall is moving from Ramsey and asked that we request Mayor Botta to invite her to the next Council Meeting for a certificate. She has a long history of public service. Acting Mayor added that we should also recognize Judge Huot. Councilman Vozech stated that we would be adding a resolution to award the contract to Drewes Plumbing for renovations at the senior citizens building, in the amount of \$9,450.00.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Heller, seconded by Dillon, to adjourn the meeting. Carried.

Meredith Bendian  
Borough Clerk