

BOROUGH OF RAMSEY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
April 11, 2007

Mayor Botta called the regular meeting of the Mayor and Council to order and asked for a moment of silence in memory of former Police Lieutenant Bill Nussbaum, who died on April 5. Lt. Nussbaum had been a member of the Ramsey Police Department for 30 years prior to his retirement 1 ½ years ago. Council President led the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

III. COMMUNICATIONS -

Motion by Jones to receive and file the following Communications and accept Mr. Fleming's resignation, seconded by Dillon. Carried. Councilman Heller expressed his appreciation to Bill Fleming for his years of service to the Borough. Council President Nalbandian stated that he echoed Councilman Heller's remarks and wished Mr. Fleming well in his retirement.

1. Richard Wierer, Director of Solid Waste & Information Technology Systems, Bergen County Utilities Authority, Box 9 Mehrhof Road, Little Ferry, NJ 07643
letter dated April 2, 2007, explaining the BCUA Solid Waste Cooperative Marketing Program.
2. Donna M. Sack, Member Leonia Walk Committee, Scleroderma Foundation, 59 Front Street, Binghamton, NY 13905
letter dated April 1, 2007, asking the Mayor and Council to proclaim June as Scleroderma Awareness Month.
3. Farouk Ahmad, Director, Bergen County Dept. of Planning and Economic Development, One Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, NJ 07601

letter dated April 3, 2007, regarding the Municipal Interest in Transfer of Development Rights Program.

4. William Fleming, DPW Employee
letter dated April 3, 2007, announcing his retirement from the Borough of Ramsey effective July 1, 2007.

IV. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Botta made the following appointments:

Zach Schleicher – Office of Emergency Management

Angela Strollo – Board of Adjustment - (filling the unexpired term of Paul Huot)

Vanessa Jachzel – Board of Adjustment - (filling the unexpired term of Nancy Hall)

Luke Chamberlin – Board of Adjustment- Alt #1 (filling unexpired term of Vanessa Jachzel)

James DiTomaso – Ramsey Volunteer Fire Department

V. CONSENT RESOLUTION

Introduced by Vozech, seconded by Heller

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: Release of escrow release in the amount of \$150.00 to Ingui, LLC, Block 2306, Lot 7.
- c. Resolution: Emergency Temporary Budget
- d. Resolution: Appointing Zach Schleicher to the Office of Emergency Management.
- e. Resolution: Authorizing the Borough Administrator to execute the permit application to the Department of Environmental

Protection for Franklin Tpk. Construction Co, for work at 293 S. Central Ave.

- f. Resolution: Authorizing a COAH Review and approval of the Borough of Ramsey's spending plan amendment.
- g. Resolution: Appointing Angela Strollo to the Board of Adjustment filling the unexpired term of Paul Huot.
- h. Resolution: Appointing Luke Chamberlin to the Board of Adjustment as Alt. #1 filling the unexpired term of Vanessa Jachzel.
- i. Resolution: Appointing Vanessa Jachzel to the Board of Adjustment filling the unexpired term of Nancy Hall.
- j. Resolution: Awarding a contract for maintenance of borough lands to Pat Scanlan Landscaping.
- k. Resolution: Appointing James DiTomaso to the Ramsey Volunteer Fire Department.
- l. Resolution: Designating April 29 through May 5, 2007 as Municipal Clerk's Week in the Borough of Ramsey.

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

A. SPECIAL PERMITS:

V.F.W. Post 682 is requesting permission to sell poppies at various locations in the Borough between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm during the month of May.

Woman's Club of Ramsey is requesting permission to use the Masonic Lodge Parking Lot for their annual heirloom tomato sale on Saturday, May 19, 2007 between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.

Ramsey Area Garden Club is requesting permission to hang signs advertising their plant sale between April 28, 2007 and May 12, 2007.

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

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS - None

Councilman Siemsen joined the Mayor to administer the oath of office to Angela Strollo.

VII. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

A. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION -Councilman Bruce Vozech

My best wishes and appreciation to Bill Fleming. We wish him well in the future.

My congratulations to Angela and all of the new appointees tonight. We thank you for your service. We will be introducing the budget tonight. We awarded a bid for landscaping tonight and it is more cost effective to privatize some of the maintenance of the Borough's lands. We got a better bid than we could have hired to do that.

B. PUBLIC SAFETY – Council President Arthur M. Nalbandian

I too would like to thank Angela Strollo for volunteering to serve on the Board of Adjustment and all the other appointees tonight for volunteering in various capacities. We truly appreciate their dedication and service. It is very sad to learn of Bill Nussbaum's passing. He had retired 1 ½ years ago after 30 years of service to the Ramsey Police Department. My deepest sympathies to his family and friends. Ramsey was once again named by the National Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City, U.S.A. It is a great thing for the community and thanks go to the Shade Tree Commission for their dedication and hard work.

DARE Officer Tim Shoemaker gave his annual Higher Education seminar for parents at the high school. It was very informative. Paul Vassallo was also a part of it and I thank the school and the Ramsey Municipal Drug Alliance for their participation and involvement. They all deserve a lot of credit.

C. BUILDING & ZONING – Councilman Andrew Siemsen

I too would like to congratulate and thank tonight's appointments.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the community. Having been liaison to the Board of Adjustment, I would like to congratulate all the new appointees. I wish them many years of volunteer service.

D. UTILITIES, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Councilman Jeffrey C. Heller

I would like to express my condolences to the family of Lt. Bill Nussbaum. Lt. Nussbaum was a member of the Ramsey Police Department when it was undergoing many, many changes and improvements. He survived all of those transitions and continued to serve the people of Ramsey. It is always sad to see someone die so shortly after retirement. My congratulations to the new appointees. The façade improvements for the front of borough hall are well underway. We met last night with the architect, Barry Poskanzer. There will be renderings within a few weeks, for council review. The road resurfacing is underway. The old fence at the pool is being ripped out and the new fence will be installed before the pool season opens.

E. PUBLIC & GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS – Councilman William Jones

I offer my congratulations to the appointees tonight, in particular, Angela Strollo.

She is a very dedicated person. April 28 is the clean-up day along the bikepaths from noon to 4 p.m. The Fine Arts Council will be presenting its first Open Mic night at the Borders in Interstate. There is a 7:00 p.m. sign-up. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. It will feature acoustic musical performances, poetry readings, theatrical monologues, and stand-up comedy. It is open to everyone. The annual 4th of July fireworks and concert will be expanding this year with additional musical opportunities. On July 20, there will be a concert on the lawn of the High School celebrating Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club 40th anniversary. The Crop Walk and Harvest Festival will be on October 14th. I would like to remind everyone that Tuesday is the School Board elections and everyone should vote.

F. HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES – Councilwoman Deirdre A. Dillon

I would like to echo Councilman Nalbandian's remarks regarding the DARE higher education program. Tim Shoemaker and everyone did a great job; it was very informative. My condolences to the Nussbaum family. Lt. Nussbaum actually helped us with the fingerprinting of the first graders and it was an absolute pleasure to work with him. The Board of Education election will take place on Tuesday. Please remember to vote. Congratulations to Mr. Fleming on his retirement and best wishes for the future. Congratulations to all the new appointees tonight. There is no doubt in my mind that Angela Strollo will serve the town well in her new role.

G. MAYOR CHRISTOPHER C. BOTTA

My thanks to Bill Fleming on his years of service to the town. Thank you to Angela Strollo for agreeing to serve on the Zoning Board. Also, to our other employees, my thanks for volunteering. My condolences to the Nussbaum family. I worked with him when I was the municipal prosecutor and his presence will be missed.

I encourage everyone to vote in the school elections.

The baseball parade is scheduled for Saturday. The townwide clean-up is April 28 and I encourage everyone who can to get out and join in the clean-up.

H. BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Peter A. Scandariato, Esq. None

I. BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR – Nicholas C. Saros

Congratulations to William Fleming on his retirement. I have known Bill for the past 25 years and he has been a truly outstanding and dedicated employee. He is a hard worker who served the Borough very well. My condolences to the Nussbaum family. Bill was always a wonderful employee and was a joy to work with and a true professional.

J. BOROUGH CLERK – Meredith Bendian None

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT None

IX. ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

- 11-2007 Ordinance entitled Municipal Improvements; Curbs
- 12-2007 Ordinance to repeal Ord. 29-2006, and amend and supplement the Chapter X, Personnel Policies, sections related to Compensation

Ord. 11-2007 – Improvements to curbs
Resolution by Siemsen, seconded by Heller

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER XVII OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SECTION 17-5 SUBSECTION 17-5.3 ENTITLED MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS: CURBS 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 Siemsen stated that this ordinance was actually recommended to us by the Planning Board. It corrects an inconsistency on new residential streets requiring Belgian block curbing.

Councilman Heller stated that Belgian block does not break like cement curbs. It is far superior from a maintenance standpoint.

Not seeing anyone else who wished to speak, Mayor closed the public hearing for ord. 11-2007.

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

Ord. 12-2007 – Salary Ordinance
Resolution by Vozeh, seconded by Dillon

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL ORDINANCE NO. 29-2006 AND TO AMEND AND SUPPLEMENT CHAPTER X, PERSONNEL POLICIES OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, 1997, BY ADDING THERETO SECTIONS RELATING TO COMPENSATION IN THE BOROUGH OF RAMSEY, NEW JERSEY, COUNTY OF BERGEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY 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 Vozeh stated that this ordinance sets the minimum and maximum ranges for salaries for borough employees who are not covered by union contracts. This does not set any particular level for those salaries or any kind of increases in that nature, just sets the ranges. A couple of ranges have been modified in this ordinance and that all it does. Any kind of incremental inflation related increases or anything that we do is done on a separate resolution and is not in this ordinance. This is strictly to set salary ranges and guidelines.

Not seeing anyone else who wished to speak, Mayor closed the public hearing for ord. 12-2007.

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

X. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

13-2007 Right Of Way Dedication for Williams Drive Extension
Introduced by Heller, seconded by Nalbandian

BE IT RESOLVED that an ordinance entitled: ACCEPTING RIGHT OF WAY DEDICATION WILLIAMS DRIVE EXTENSION 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 25th day of April, 2007, 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, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None`

14-2007 Ordinance entitled Fire Prevention and Protection
Introduced by Nalbandian, seconded by Siemsen

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 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 25th day of April, 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, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

XII. NEW BUSINESS Introduction of Municipal Budget

Councilman Vozeh stated that the Finance and Administration Committee is made up of Council President Nalbandian, Councilman Heller, and myself. We have worked with the Mayor as well as the other Councilmembers, Borough Administrator, department heads, and employees on this budget and I would like to thank everyone for their help in this process.

This is a prudent, fiscal approach and this does not happen by accident. We have low municipal taxes, relative to other towns in our area. We also have an extremely low level of debt and our prudent approach has served us well. The budget represents a 2.9% increase over last year. The tax increase is 3.8% again basically in line with inflation. The tax increase is slightly higher than the budget is due to the use of other revenue sources and surplus that have changed from year to year. There has been a lot of discussion regarding state aid and how it is going up. The state aid number for our municipal budget has gone up by \$40,000.00 this year. This is on a \$21 million budget. That's about 2/10's of 1% of our budget. We appreciate the increase in state aid but it hasn't been something that has been a windfall to us. I think the perception out there is that state aid has really bolstered and helped out communities but it is minor number compared to the overall level of the budget. From last year to this year, we have increases in our mandated contributions for police, fire pension as well as the public employee pension accounts. The increases are over \$300,000.00 from last year. We are mandated to make a contribution to the Library by a formula based on our ratables so that increases \$118,500 over last year, 11.1% increase over last year. We have some higher landfill costs because of new contracts. Rockland Electric has gone in for a rate case increase for electrical rates. Gasoline and oil prices are up; so those some of the things that have impacted us in a negative way. We have offset that with some savings programs in other areas such as medical insurance and benefits. We have tried to keep our taxes stable and in line with inflation. A lot of mandates are well above that. I think we have done a very reasonable job in tightening our belts and look for other places where we may continue on those savings. Again, in a community where our ratables are close to fully developed, we don't have a lot of new sources of ratables, this is an area where we really have to work to keep our budget in line. We do not have the blessing of growing ratables which would help camouflage cost increases and mitigate the tax

impact. We don't have that luxury. I think the collective efforts of everyone up here and everyone in this building and the employee base have worked together and presented this budget and that would include my comments and introduce the budget.

Borough Administrator read the budget resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following statements of revenue and appropriations shall constitute the municipal budget for the year 2007:

Total General Revenues	\$21,080,643.44
Total local tax municipal purposes	13,692,585.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said budget be published in The Record in the issue of April 21, 2007,

The governing body of the Borough of Ramsey does hereby approve the following as the budget for the year 2007. Notice is hereby given that the budget and tax resolution was approved by the governing body of the Borough of Ramsey, County of Bergen on April 11, 2007, and that a hearing on the budget and the tax resolution will be held at the municipal building on May 9, 2007, at 8:30 p.m. at which time and place objections to said budget and tax resolution for the year 2007 may be presented by taxpayers, other interested persons.

Motion by Vozeh, seconded by Heller, to approve the introduction of the budget.
AYES: Dillon, Heller, Jones, Nalbandian, Siemsen, Vozeh NAYS: None

Borough Administrator stated that the average assessed valuation of a home in Ramsey is approximately \$427,000.00 and we are looking at an increase of \$80 per home for the year.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meredith Bendian
Borough Clerk