

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
MEETING – June 5, 2023**

Mayor Huelsebusch *calls the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.* announcing that all laws governing the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting has been duly advertised.

**PRESENT:** Mayor J. Huelsebusch, Deputy Mayor A. Mueller, Mr. J. Albanese, Mr. J. Heller, and Mr. V. Panico (arrived at 5:15 p.m.)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Administrator R. Sheola, Municipal Clerk K. Parker, Attorney S. Dragan and Twp Engineer R. O’Brien

**ABSENT:** None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Clerk read the following Resolution:

**RESOLUTION**  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 *et seq.*, the Open Public Meetings Act, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township Committee is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist and desires to authorize the exclusion of the public from the portion of the meeting in accordance with the act;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of and action upon the specified subject matter as set forth in the following Exhibit “A.”

**EXHIBIT A**

<b><u>Subject Matter</u></b>	<b><u>Basis Of Public Exclusion</u></b>	<b><u>Date Anticipated When Disclosed to Public</u></b>
Attorney-Client Privilege .....	Attorney-Client Privilege .....	Certain information at the discretion of the Township Committee tonight...other Information will remain confidential
Police Department .....	Personnel .....	“ “ “
Shared Services / Twp of Raritan..... (Fire Sub-code Official)	Contract Negotiations .....	“ “ “
Fire Companies .....	Contract Negotiations .....	“ “ “
Lease Agreement / Darts Mill .....	Contract Negotiations .....	“ “ “
(Block 73, Lot 15)		
Memorandum of Understanding / .....	Contract Negotiations .....	“ “ “
Block 73, Lots 23.01 & 25 (Readington Twp) and Block 37, Lot 1 and Block 28 (Raritan Twp)		
Contract for Sale of Real Estate / .....	Contract Negotiations .....	“ “ “
124 Rockafellows Mill Road		
Attorney-Client Privilege.....	Attorney-Client Privilege .....	“ “ “
Executive Session Minutes.....	Attorney-Client Privilege.....	“ “ “
• May 15, 2023		

Affordable Housing.....	Potential Litigation.....	“	“	“
DeMaio Electric vs. Twp of Readington....	Litigation .....	“	“	“

It is anticipated at this time that the stated subject matter will be made public on or about the time set forth in Exhibit “A.”

2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Albanese with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

The meeting reconvened at 7:50 p.m.

Mayor Huelsebusch led those present in the *Salute to the Flag*.

**Executive Session:**

**Attorney-Client Privilege / Attorney- Privilege**

Mayor Huelsebusch stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

**Personnel / Police Department**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-87**

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING HARRY HULTS, JR. AS CLASS III OFFICER**

**WHEREAS**, there exists a need to fill a vacancies in the Class III ranks of the Police Department; and

**WHEREAS**, following the review of resumes and interviewing viable candidates it is the recommendation of the Public Safety Director and Township Administrator to hire Harry Hults, Jr. to the position of Class III Police Officer at the current contract rates subject to the successful passing of a psychological examination; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IS FURTHER RESOLVED** that all provisions of the Township Personnel Policies shall be afforded Harry Hults, Jr. during his employment.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Heller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

- Mr. Albanese -Aye
- Mr. Heller - Aye
- Mr. Mueller - Aye
- Mr. Panico - Aye
- Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

**Contract Negotiations / Shared Services / Township of Raritan (Fire Sub-code Official)**

Mayor Huelsebusch stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

**Contract Negotiations / Fire Companies**

Mayor Huelsebusch stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

***Contract Negotiations / Lease Agreement / Darts Mill (Block 73, Lot 15)***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to approve the lease agreement with Raritan Headwaters Association, seconded by Mr. Heller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

***Contract Negotiations / Memorandum of Understanding / Block 73, Lots 23.01 & 25 (Readington Twp) and Block 37 Lot 1 and Block 28, Lot 1 (Raritan Twp)***

Mayor Huelsebusch stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

***Contract Negotiations / Contract for Sale of Real Estate / 124 Rockafellows Mill Road***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to approve the contract for sale in the amount of \$750,000, seconded by Mr. Albanese and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

***Attorney-Client Privilege / Executive Session Minutes / May 15, 2023***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to approve the Executive Session Minutes of May 15, 2023, for content only, seconded by Mr. Albanese with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

***Potential Litigation / Affordable Housing***

Mayor Huelsebusch stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

***Litigation / DeMaio Electrical vs. Township of Readington***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to approve the Settlement Agreement and General Release with De Maio Electrical Company Inc., seconded by Mr. Heller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Mayor Huelsebusch read the following statement:

*All items listed with an asterisk "\*" are considered to be routine by the Township Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a committee member or citizen requests, in which event the item will be removed from the General Order of Business and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.*

Mr. Heller requested to remove *Item #*, Mr. Panico requested to remove *Item #6* and John Broten requested to remove *Item # 7* from the Consent Agenda

1. \* **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** of meeting of May 11<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup> (2023)
2. \* ***Tax Lien Redemption***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

***READINGTON TOWNSHIP***  
***HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY***  
***RESOLUTION***

***WHEREAS***, an interested party has paid to the Tax Collector the amount necessary to redeem the lien on Block 36, Lot 90 and,

***WHEREAS***, it is the desire of the Tax Collector to refund to the lienholder the redemption amount.

***NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Township Committee that the Treasurer be authorized to refund the redemption amount of \$1,071.92, plus a premium paid in the amount of \$2,200.00, known as Tax Sale Certificate #2022-006, to the lienholder, Bala Partners, LLC.

3. \* ***Tax Lien Redemption***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

***READINGTON TOWNSHIP***  
***HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY***  
***RESOLUTION***

***WHEREAS***, an interested party has paid to the Tax Collector the amount necessary to redeem the lien on Block 77, Lot 1; and

***WHEREAS***, it is the desire of the Tax Collector to refund to the lienholder the redemption amount.

***NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Township Committee that the Treasurer be authorized to refund the redemption amount of \$44,296.06, plus a premium paid in the amount of \$12,000.00, known as Tax Sale Certificate #2022-011, to the lienholder, Ridgeback Ventures, LLC.

4. \* ***Tax Lien Redemption***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

***READINGTON TOWNSHIP***  
***HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY***  
***RESOLUTION***

***WHEREAS***, an interested party has paid to the Tax Collector the amount necessary to redeem the lien on Block 77, Lot 1 B01; and

***Tax Lien Redemption cont'd:***

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the Tax Collector to refund to the lienholder the redemption amount.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee that the Treasurer be authorized to refund the redemption amount of \$1,717.86, known as Tax Sale Certificate #2022-012, to the lienholder, Ridgeback Ventures, LLC.

5. \* ***Tax Lien Redemption***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP**  
**HUNTERDON COUNTY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, an interested party has paid to the Tax Collector the amount necessary to redeem the lien on Block 77, Lot 1 B02 and,

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the Tax Collector to refund to the lienholder the redemption amount.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Township Committee that the Treasurer be authorized to refund the redemption amount of \$1,717.86, known as Tax Sale Certificate #2022-013, to the lienholder, Ridgeback Ventures, LLC.

6. \* ***Resolution for Acceptance of 2022 Audit***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**# R-2023-88**

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON**  
**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts and financial transactions; and

**WHEREAS**, The Annual Report of Audit for the year 2022 has been filed by the Registered Municipal Accountant with the Municipal Clerk as per the requirements of N.J.S.A. 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and

**WHEREAS**, R.S. 52:27BB-34 authorizes the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Local Finance Board has promulgated a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall by resolution certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, at a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled "General Comments and Recommendations" and

**WHEREAS**, the members of the governing body have personally reviewed, at a minimum, the Annual Report of Audit, and specifically the sections of the Annual Audit entitled "General Comments and Recommendations" as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body; and

**Resolution #R-2023-88 cont'd:**

**WHEREAS**, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the Governing Body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5; and

**WHEREAS**, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with at least the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board; and

**WHEREAS**, failure to comply with the promulgations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52 - to wit:

R.S. 52:27BB-52 - A local officer or member of a local governing body who, after a date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in addition shall forfeit his office.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the governing body of the Township of Readington, hereby states that it has complied with N.J.A.C. 5:30-6.5 and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and the required affidavit to said Board to show evidence of said compliance.

7. \* **Resolution for Approval of LOSAP Lists for Y2022**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-89**

**APPROVAL OF LOSAP LISTS FOR Y2022**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Readington created a Public Safety Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) through Ordinance #08-99 (amended in its entirety 8-5-2002 by Ordinance #31-2002) and voted upon via referendum on November 2, 1999 and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with NJAC 5:30-14.10, the Governing Body must annually approve the LOSAP contribution list; and

**WHEREAS**, said attached list (On file in Clerk's Office) has been reviewed and found to be accurate; and

**WHEREAS**, the total amount of payment for both the Volunteer Fire Company members and the Rescue Squad members is \$72,000.00.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Township Committee of the Township of Readington does hereby approve the 2022 LOSAP contribution list in the amount of \$72,000.00.

8. \* **Resolution in Opposition of the Proposed Sale of the Property Commonly Known as Hunterdon County Transfer Station / Materials Recovery Facility**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-90**

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON  
 RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Readington has been notified that the County of Hunterdon is considering the sale of the Hunterdon County Transfer Station/Materials Recovery Facility in Clinton Township; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed sale will undoubtedly increase the cost of operations to the numerous solid waste collection companies who will be forced to locate other such facilities at a further distance; and

**WHEREAS**, despite a study conducted by Sterner Consulting in 2021, Hunterdon County has not made any improvements to the facility despite the report citing in excess of \$500,000 in needed repairs; and

**WHEREAS**, the same Sterner report indicated a “minimum sale price of \$300,000”; however, does not calculate the additional costs associated with a longer travel to an approved transfer station or other compatible facility, such costs will be undoubtedly passed on to the customers; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Township Committee of the Township of Readington:

- 1) Does hereby express its opposition to this proposed sale until such time as a complete economic analysis has been performed which, at a minimum, show the potential additional costs to the haulers, and ultimately our taxpayers;
  - 2) The County of Hunterdon identify all approved facilities in its Solid Waste Master Plan that have capacity to accept Type 10 and Type 13 residential solid waste at an equal or lower cost per ton than the Hunterdon County Transfer Station/Materials Recovery Facility in Clinton Township.
  - 3) A certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to each of the Hunterdon County Commissioners and the Hunterdon County Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners.
9. \* **Acceptance of New Jersey American Water Grant for "Rockaway Creek E. Coli Source" in the Amount of \$10,000**
10. \* **Release of Escrow / PNC Bank (Block 5, Lot 6)**
11. \* **Payment of Bills** – (Complete bill list is on file in Clerk’s Office)

<u>Fund Description</u>	<u>Fund No.</u>	<u>Received Total</u>
GENERAL	2-01	\$ 7,864.28
SEWER UTILITY OP FUND	2-02	\$ 1,175.00
GENERAL	3-01	\$ 3,701,028.69
SEWER UTILITY OP FUND	3-02	\$ 127,052.63
OTHER TRUST	X-03	\$ 23,435.76
MISC REFUND, COUNTY		
TAX LIENS	X-05	\$ 2,432.00
PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS	X-06	\$ 220,432.06
2014 CAP IMPROVEMENTS	X-14	\$ 1,520.00
2018 CAP IMPROVEMENTS	X-18	\$ 140.00
2019 CAP IMPROVEMENTS	X-19	\$ 89.97
2021 CAP IMPROVEMENTS	X-21	\$ 1,074.75
202-14 VARIOUS CAPITAL	X-22	\$ 9,679.61
<b>TOTAL OF ALL FUNDS</b>		<b>\$ 4,095,924.75</b>

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to approve the Consent Agenda (*with the removal of items #2, 6 & 7*), seconded by Mr. Heller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** for items listed on the agenda only

John Broten inquired if the Township was considering sewer expansion.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

As it was after 7:45 p.m., A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico to adjourn the regular meeting to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Mueller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

**2023 Municipal Budget- Amendment**

Administrator Richard Sheola and Chief Financial Officer Tom Ferry gave a slide presentation on the 2023 amended budget.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the governing body.

Mr. Heller commented on the amended budget and expressed concern that the decision to hold the budget to a zero increase is not fiscally responsible and will affect future budgets going forward.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the public.

Andrew Roth requested that the Township consider purchasing an electromagnetic meter.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Panico with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to amend the *2023 Municipal Budget*, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to adjourn the regular meeting to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Panico with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

**2023 Municipal Budget**

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the governing body.

Deputy Mayor Mueller reiterated the need to have a long-term capital improvement plan in place for future spending.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the public.

Paula Trepello asked for clarification on open space tax, debt on the interest on the original airport bond and the debt service.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Panico with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.



A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to adopt the *2023 Municipal Budget*, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese	-Aye
Mr. Heller	- Aye
Mr. Mueller	- Aye
Mr. Panico	- Aye
Mayor Huelsebusch	- Aye

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to adjourn the regular meeting to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Panico with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 148 “LAND DEVELOPMENT” OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON “PERTAINING TO LIMITED BREWERIES”***

***ORDINANCE #11-2023***

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the governing body.

Deputy Mayor Mueller stated that this ordinance was amended at the request of the owner of the Readington Brewery to be more in line with the state guidelines specifically regarding events.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the public.

John Broten spoke about the need to support small local businesses.

Jacqueline Hindle, Chair of Planning Board, noted that the restriction on the proposed ordinance merely addresses the outdoor amplified noise.

Betty Ann Fort recalled that previously when the Bouman Stickney Museum held wedding events, neighbors made complaints on noise levels and also indicated that enforcement of noise levels can be difficult.

Andrew Roth spoke to restrictions regulated by the state versus municipal standards.

Paula Trepello stated that she was in support of the brewery and not adding further restrictions.

Braun Kiess, Readington Brewery, requested that the Committee consider revising the ordinance to be in line with the state regulations.

The Committee discussed approving the amended ordinance as is and with the possibility of returning it to the Planning Board for further review and consideration.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Heller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 148 “LAND DEVELOPMENT” OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON “PERTAINING TO LIMITED BREWERIES”***

***ORDINANCE #11-2023***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico to adopt this ordinance, seconded by Mr. Albanese and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Nay  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Nay

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to adjourn the regular meeting to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Heller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE #21-2022 PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF DEED RESTRICTIONS ON HOUSING UNITS SHOWN ON THE OFFICIAL TOWNSHIP TAX MAP AS BLOCK 95, LOTS 12.005, 12.399 AND 12.401 BY THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY***

***ORDINANCE #12-2023***

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the governing body.

There were none.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the public.

There were none.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Mueller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE #21-2022 PROVIDING FOR THE ACQUISITION OF DEED RESTRICTIONS ON HOUSING UNITS SHOWN ON THE OFFICIAL TOWNSHIP TAX MAP AS BLOCK 95, LOTS 12.005, 12.399 AND 12.401 BY THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY***

***ORDINANCE #12-2023***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller to adopt this ordinance, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Mueller to adjourn the regular meeting to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Heller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$2,187,350 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,016,300 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF***

***ORDINANCE #13-2023***

Administrator Sheola gave an overview of the capital improvements listed in the bond ordinance.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the governing body.

Mr. Heller commented that several of the capital improvements should be funded through the budget, not in a bond ordinance which will further increase the debt.

Deputy Mayor Mueller stressed the necessity of a long-term capital improvement plan.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the public.

John Broten inquired about the police vehicles and the allocated budget for road paving.

A ***MOTION*** was made by Mr. Panico to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Mueller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS IN AND BY THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTERDON, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$2,187,350 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,016,300 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE TOWNSHIP TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF***

***ORDINANCE #13-2023***

A ***MOTION*** was made by Mr. Heller to adopt this ordinance, seconded by Mr. Albanese and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese	-Aye
Mr. Heller	- Aye
Mr. Mueller	- Aye
Mr. Panico	- Nay
Mayor Huelsebusch	- Aye

A ***MOTION*** was made by Mr. Panico to adjourn the regular meeting to hold a Public Hearing, seconded by Mr. Mueller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 204, "STREETS AND SIDEWALKS," AND CHAPTER 103, "DISORDERLY CONDUCT," OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON***

***ORDINANCE #14-2023***

Attorney Dragan advised that a letter was sent as a public comment, citing cases of the unconstitutionality of the ordinance, and suggested possibly rescinding or tabling the ordinance for further discussion with the Public Safety Director.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the governing body.

Deputy Mayor Heller spoke to the lack of enforcement with some of the Township ordinances.

Mayor Huelsebusch asked if there were any comments from the public.

Andrew Roth expressed concerns about some of the language in the ordinance.

Tim Tedesco opined on the unconstitutionality of the ordinance.

Paula Tropello inquired about the wording of the ordinance and her concerns for safety on the roads.

**A MOTION** was made by Mr. Albanese to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Mueller with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Clerk read by Title:

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 204, "STREETS AND SIDEWALKS," AND CHAPTER 103, "DISORDERLY CONDUCT," OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON***

***ORDINANCE #14-2023***

**A MOTION** was made by Mr. Albanese to continue the public hearing on this ordinance to the next meeting on June 19<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Mr. Mueller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese	-Aye
Mr. Heller	- Aye
Mr. Mueller	- Aye
Mr. Panico	- Aye
Mayor Huelsebusch	- Aye

***CORRESPONDENCE / OTHER INFORMATION***

1. Letter dated May 25, 2023 from Lindsay Heller, Administrative Assistant, Township of Clinton regarding a ***Resolution Supporting S-2186/A-3677; Prohibiting the Sale, Distribution or Propagation of Certain Invasive Plant Species***. No action taken.
2. Letter dated May 23, 2023 from Shana Goodchild, Land Use Administrator, Township of Tewksbury regarding a ***Public Hearing on and Consider the Adoption of an Amendment to the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan of the 2003 Master Plan of Tewksbury Township***. No action taken.

***OLD BUSINESS***

1. ***An Ordinance Amending Chapter 201 "Special Events" of the Code of the Township of Readington to Include Applications for Filming and to Provide for Additional Regulations Governing Special Events Applications***

Attorney Dragan outlined the changes that were made to the special events ordinance specifically relating to filming. Mr. Heller stated that something should be added regarding the use of drones. The Committee concurred that the ordinance would be tabled to another meeting to include language addressing drones.

2. ***Resolution Authorizing Being Officially Included in the Federal Highlands Boundary***

Richard Dodds, of the NJ Conservation Foundation, gave a brief slide presentation on the Highlands, emphasizing that the inclusion in the Federal Highlands boundary would provide more grant opportunities for the Township.

***#R-2023-91***

***TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON***

***RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING BEING OFFICIALLY INCLUDED IN THE FEDERAL HIGHLANDS BOUNDARY***

***WHEREAS***, the Highlands region, encompasses more than three million acres of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut; and

***WHEREAS***, the Highlands region is an area of national significance, possessing substantial natural beauty, containing contiguous forest and productive farmland, numerous cultural and historic sites, plentiful recreation opportunities, and the protection and supply of important drinking water sources for over fifteen million people; and

***WHEREAS***, the U.S. Congress, in bipartisanship, passed the Highlands Conservation Act, Public Law 10-421 that was signed into law by the President of the United States on November 30, 2004, designating the Highlands as a significant national conservation priority region; and

***WHEREAS***, the Highlands Conservation Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to provide financial assistance to Highlands States to preserve and protect high priority conservation land in the Highlands region; and

***WHEREAS***, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service manages a voluntary grant program to assist Highlands States, local units of government, and private forest and farm landowners in the conservation of land and natural resources in the Highlands region in coordination with willing sellers; and

***WHEREAS***, land preservation efforts in the Highlands region should link the parks, historic sites, wetlands, wildlife habitats, streams, rivers, reservoirs, watershed, trails, scenic and natural lands and other protected areas unique to the region for the enjoyment of future generations; and

***NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*** that the Township of Readington supports being officially included in the federal Highlands boundary, as maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Highlands Conservation Act grant program, thereby qualifying for financial and technical assistance provided by the U.S. Congress.

***A MOTION*** was made by Mr. Mueller to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese	-Aye
Mr. Heller	- Aye
Mr. Mueller	- Aye
Mr. Panico	- Aye
Mayor Huelsebusch	- Aye

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Temporary Capital Budget Amendment**

Chief Financial Officer Tom Ferry gave a brief explanation as to the need for the capital budget amendment.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller to approve the temporary capital budget amendment, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

2. **Special Items of Revenue and Appropriations in the 2023 Budget Pursuant to the N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-92**

**SPECIAL ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION  
IN THE 2023 BUDGET  
PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87**

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

**WHEREAS**, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount; and

**Resolution #2023-92 cont'd:**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Readington received the sum of \$134,073.21 from various grants as listed below and wishes to amend its 2023 budget to include that amount as revenues.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Township Committee of the Township of Readington in the County of Hunterdon, New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of items of revenue in the budget of the year 2023 in the sum of \$134,073.21, which items are now available as a revenue from the following sources pursuant to the provision of statute:

New Jersey American Water Environmental Grant Program	\$10,000.00
Local Recreational Improvement Grant	\$ 50,000.00
Clean Communities Grant	\$ 64,006.65
National Opioid Settlements	\$ 10,066.56

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a like sum of \$134,073.21 be and the same is hereby appropriated under the caption of the following:

New Jersey American Water Environmental Grant Program	\$10,000.00
Local Recreational Improvement Grant	\$ 50,000.00
Clean Communities Grant	\$ 64,006.65
National Opioid Settlements	\$ 10,066.56

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Heller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

3. ***Change of Township Holidays from November 6<sup>th</sup> (Election Day) to July 3<sup>rd</sup>***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Albanese to accept the change in the Township holidays from November 6<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup> for 2023, seconded by Mr. Heller and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

4. ***Request to Waive and Reimburse Late Property Tax Fees - letter from Kenneth and Cheryl Nadzak***

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller to waive and reimburse the late property tax fees, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

5. ***Request for Permission to Commence Site Work in the Dedicated Conservation Easement / Hendrick (Block 51.02 / Lot 38)***

Engineer Rob O'Brien explained that the applicant received approval from the Board of Adjustment to expand the existing deck on their property and replace the fence that encroaches on the conservation easement.

Attorney Dragan stated that the easement and ordinance will need to be amended.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller approve the request, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

6. ***\* Resolution for Acceptance of 2022 Audit***

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

7. ***Resolution Approving the Corrective Action Plan for the Annual Audit Report for the Year Ending 2022***

Mr. Panico noted that it was recommended to eliminate the acceptance of credit card payments for dog licenses and opined that it would be more difficult for residents to pay.

Chief Financial Officer Tom Ferry confirmed his recommendation in the corrective action plan that dog licenses be paid only with cash or check. Chief Financial Officer Ferry explained that the current program does not interact with credit card payments, causing many bookkeeping issues and reaffirmed his recommendation to eliminate credit cards remain in the corrective action plan.

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-88**

***RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 2022***

***WHEREAS***, the New Jersey Budget and Fiscal Affairs laws require all local governments to prepare and submit a Corrective Action Plan as part of their annual audit process: and

***WHEREAS***, the Corrective Action Plan, which outlines actions the Township of Readington will take to correct the findings listed in the Comments and Recommendations section of the 2022 Audit Report, was prepared by the Chief Financial Officer, and placed on file with the Township Clerk within 60 days from the date the audit report was received by the governing body: and

***WHEREAS***, the governing body is required to review and to approve the Corrective Action Plan.

***BE IT RESOLVED*** by the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon that they hereby approve the Corrective Action Plan prepared by the Chief Financial Officer in response to the 2022 Audit Report Comments and Recommendations: and

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*** that the Municipal Clerk shall file a certified copy of this Resolution with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

***A MOTION*** was made by Mr. Heller to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese	-Aye
Mr. Heller	- Aye
Mr. Mueller	- Aye
Mr. Panico	- Aye
Mayor Huelsebusch	- Aye

8. ***\* Resolution for Approval of LOSAP Lists for Y2022***

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

9. ***\* Resolution in Opposition of the Proposed Sale of the Property Commonly Known as Hunterdon County Transfer Station / Materials Recovery Facility***

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.



- 10. **\* Acceptance of New Jersey American Water Grant for "Rockaway Creek E. Coli Source" in the Amount of \$10,000**

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

- 11. **Resolution to Cancel a Grant Receivable Balance and Improvement Authorization in the Amount of \$45,190.19 in the General Capital Fund**

Mr. Heller inquired as to why the balance was being cancelled. Township Engineer O'Brien stated that the project cost came in under the allocated amount.

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-94**

**RESOLUTION TO CANCEL A GRANT RECEIVABLE BALANCE AND IMPROVEMENT AUTHORIZATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$45,190.19 IN THE GENERAL CAPITAL FUND**

**WHEREAS**, the NJ Department of Transportation Grants Receivable for Milling and Paving Kline Boulevard has an outstanding balance of \$45,190.19 in Grants Receivable in the General Capital Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, the Readington Township Chief Financial Officer recommends that the Grants Receivable and the offsetting Improvement Authorization (21-07) in the amount of \$45,190.19 be cancelled.

<u>ORDINANCE #</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
X-21- -007-003	Road Improvements	\$45,190.19

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Township Committee that the Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized to cancel \$45,190.19 in Grants Receivable – NJ Department of Transportation – Kline Boulevard and Improvement-Authorizations (21-07) in the General Capital Fund.

**A MOTION** was made by Mr. Heller to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Panico and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

- Mr. Albanese            -Aye
- Mr. Heller                - Aye
- Mr. Mueller             - Aye
- Mr. Panico                - Aye
- Mayor Huelsebusch   - Aye

- 12. **Resolution to Reallocate the Sewer Utility Operating Fund Balance in the Amount of \$218,819.94 to a Separate Account "Reserve for Sewer Expansion"**

John Broten inquired if this was indicative of the Township Committee considering sewer expansion.

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

**#R-2023-95**

**RESOLUTION TO REALLOCATE THE SEWER UTILITY OPERATING FUND BALANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$218,819.84 TO A SEPARATE ACCOUNT “RESERVE FOR SEWER EXPANSION”**

**WHEREAS**, there are Sewer Plant Expansion Contribution and Allocation Agreements and within the agreements, monies are set aside from Developers and pursuant to the Agreements, monies are to be placed in a separate interest-bearing account (Sewer Expansion Trust Fund); and

**WHEREAS**, the Township shall use the monies to offset the charges imposed on the Township for plant expansion and/or to reimburse the Township for monies refunded to Developers who initially contributed to the cost of the expansion, and this contribution was included the Sewer Utility Fund Balance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Readington Township Chief Financial Officer recognized the Contribution in the Sewer Utility Fund Balance was an incorrect accounting application of these funds and recommends setting up a sewer account “Reserve for Sewer Expansion” in the Sewer Utility Operating Fund.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Township Committee that the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to reallocate \$218,819.84 from the Sewer Utility Fund Balance to a separate account “Reserve for Sewer Expansion” in the Sewer Utility Fund.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico to adopt this resolution, seconded by Mr. Albanese and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

Mr. Albanese -Aye  
Mr. Heller - Aye  
Mr. Mueller - Aye  
Mr. Panico - Aye  
Mayor Huelsebusch - Aye

13. \* **Release of Escrow / PNC Bank (Block 5, Lot 6)**

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

**ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT**

Administrator Sheola reported on the recent results of the smoke testing that was done in the Three Bridges area.

**ATTORNEY’S REPORT**

Attorney Dragan stated that she had nothing further to report.

**ENGINEER’S REPORT**

Engineer O’Brien reported that Department of Public Works did an excellent job repairing the force main in Lake Cushetunk this week. Engineer O’Brien further reported that PSE&G would like to install an 8-inch main on Pulaski Road from Route 523 to Lightfield Road and JCP&L is looking for an easement on Block 81 Lot 1 in Three Bridges for a pole line. Engineer O’Brien also spoke about traffic safety concerns on the one lane bridge on Mountain Road.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**JOHN ALBANESE**

Mr. Albanese stated that he had nothing further to report.

**JONATHAN HELLER**

Mr. Heller reported that a \$10,000 grant was received from NJ American Water that will be used for water testing to determine the point source of E. coli in Rockaway Creek.

**JUERGEN HUELSEBUSCH**

Mayor Huelsebusch reported that there are many improvements being made at Deer Path Park. Mayor Huelsebusch continued that the traffic safety committee is meeting regarding safety concerns on Main Street and Route 202.

**ADAM MUELLER**

Mr. Mueller provided an update on the American flag that is supposed to be that the Verizon tower at the hotel on Route 22, conditioned on a Board of Adjustment approval.

**VINCENT PANICO**

Mr. Panico stated that he had nothing further to report.

***COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC***

Elizabeth Rizzo spoke to the letter from JCP&L regarding installing poles and removing trees behind her home. Mrs. Rizzo also expressed concern about noise from the nursery that is behind her house and the neighboring group home in her development.

Charles Rizzo expressed concern about increase in noise from the highway and flooding behind his home if JCP&L removes trees to installs the poles.

Paula Tropello inquired about the Township's responsibility regarding group homes.

Christopher Di Bianco inquired if the Township is aware when a property is purchased to be used for a group home.

Tim Tedesco followed up on the drainage issues from the basin on his property.

***COMMENTS FROM THE GOVERNING BODY***

As there was no further business, **A MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico at 10:38 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Albanese with vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Submitted by:

Karin M Parker, *RMC*  
Municipal Clerk