

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
MEETING – July 23, 2024**

Mayor Mueller *calls the meeting to order at 6:00 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 A. Mueller, Deputy Mayor V. Panico, Mr. J. Albanese, Mr. J. Heller, and Mr. J. Huelsebusch

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator R. Sheola, Municipal Clerk K. Parker, Attorney M. Flynn

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:

- 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

<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>Basis Of Public Exclusion</u>	<u>Date Anticipated When Disclosed to Public</u>
Bolarakis, Devoe & Parker vs. Readington....	Litigation.....	Certain information at the discretion of Twp tonight shall remain confidential
Administration.....	Personnel	“ “ “
Police Department.....	Personnel	“ “ “
Recreation (Summer Camp Counselors).....	Personnel	“ “ “
Finance.....	Personnel	“ “ “
Museums.....	Personnel	“ “ “
Shared Services (Finance)	Contract Negotiations.....	“ “ “
Award of Hunt Club Properties Bid..... (Block 25, Lot 50)	Contract Negotiations.....	“ “ “
Professional Services /	Contract Negotiations.....	“ “ “
(Strategic Consulting & Governmental Affairs		
Block 55, Lot 34 (James)	Contract Negotiations.....	“ “ “
Block 13, Lot 9 and Block 9, Lots 20 & 21...	Contract Negotiations.....	“ “ “
Executive Session Minutes	Attorney-Client Privilege.....	“ “ “
• July 1, 2024		

Affordable Housing..... Potential 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. Panico 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 Mueller led those present in the *Salute to the Flag*.

Executive Session:

Litigation / Bolarakis, DeVoe & Parker vs. Township of Readington

Mayor Mueller opined that the Diane B Allen Act was poorly written and did not support the settlement.

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-120

RESOLUTION FIXING THE SALARIES, COMPENSATION OF CERTAIN PAID EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, Docket NO: HNT-L-000391-22 entitled Karin Parker and Gabrielle Bolarakis vs. Township of Readington, et al was filed in Superior Court of New Jersey in which wrongful acts are alleged (“the Complaint”); and

WHEREAS, the Township is provided with insurance coverage through the Municipal Excess Liability Fund (herein “MEL”) for the claims raised in the Complaint; and

WHEREAS, Plaintiff, the Township and MEL on behalf of the Township, reached agreement on the resolution of the Complaint and memorialized the settlement by execution of a Settlement Agreement and Release (the “Agreement”); and

WHEREAS, this resolution is intended to implement, in part, the aforesaid Agreement by setting the salaries of the Municipal Clerk and Recreation Director for the 2022, 2023 and 2024 calendar years.

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

1. The salary and compensation of the Municipal Clerk shall be increased to \$112,000 per year from \$89,650 per year, and with the balance due paid retroactively to the 1st day of January 2022, no later than the first payroll date following the effective of the final Settlement Agreement and Release.
2. The salary and compensation of the Recreation Director shall be increased to \$112,000 per year from \$86,850 per year, and with the balance due paid retroactively to the 1st day of January 2022, no later than the first payroll date following the effective of the final Settlement Agreement and Release.

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

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

Personnel / Administration

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-121

RESOLUTION APPOINTING CONFIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES - JESSAMINE

WHEREAS, the Administrative Offices, due to a retirement, has a vacancy for a Confidential Administrative Assistant position; and

WHEREAS, the position has been advertised and posted the vacancy internally; and

WHEREAS, there were a number of applications and after interviews with the Township Clerk, Assistant Administrator and Township Administrator, it is the recommendation to hire Amanda Jessamine for the Confidential Administrative Assistant position in the Administrative Offices in accordance with the offer letter of July 15, 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Readington Township to hire Amanda Jessamine for the Confidential Administrative Assistant for the Administrative Offices contingent upon successful completion of the requisite pre-employment physical.

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

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

Personnel / Police Department

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-122

***TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION***

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Chris DeWire was appointed as Police Officer with the Readington Township Police Department on June 11th, 2001; and

WHEREAS, during his career, Lt. DeWire was assigned to the Hunterdon County Narcotics Task Force and SWAT Team; and

WHEREAS, Lt. DeWire received many awards and accolades including Officer of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Lt. DeWire was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and Lieutenant, and served as the Police Department Officer-In-Charge.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Lt. DeWire will retire from the Readington Township Police Department effective August 1st, 2024.

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

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

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-123

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, Sergeant Pat Brown was appointed as Police Officer with the Readington Township Police Department on September 4th, 2013; and

WHEREAS, during his career, Sergeant Brown was assigned to the patrol and detective bureaus, as well as a member of the Hunterdon County Swat Team; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Brown served with the Readington Township Police Department for over 10 years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Township Committee accepts Pat Brown's separation of service effective July 1st, 2024.

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

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

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-124

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

WHEREAS, the Readington Police Department had a vacancy in the rank of Chief of Police; and

WHEREAS, the Police Department, in order to maintain a chain of command, there must be a senior command officer in charge of the daily operations of the Department; and

WHEREAS, the Township Administrator as Appropriate Authority has appointed Lt Steven Rindock as Officer in Charge, effective August 1, 2024 for a period of six months, not to extend past February 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the additional responsibilities as Officer in Charge, the Township Committee hereby increases Lt. Steven Rindock's salary by an additional \$1,500.00 per month as a stipend effective August 1, 2024

BE IT RESOLVED, this Resolution shall confirm the adjustment of Lt Steven Rindock's salary as per the above.

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

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

Personnel / Recreation (Summer Camp Counselors)

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Panico to appoint Owen Blum as a substitute senior counselor at a rate of \$17.00 per hour, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

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

Personnel / Finance

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-125

RESOLUTION APPOINTING FINANCE ASSISTANT FOR THE FINANCE OFFICES - PAUL

WHEREAS, the Finance Offices, due to a retirement, has a vacancy for a Finance Administrative Assistant position; and

WHEREAS, the position has been advertised and posted the vacancy internally; and

WHEREAS, there were a number of applications and after interviews with the Deputy Treasurer, Assistant Administrator and Township Administrator/Chief Financial Officer, it is the recommendation to hire Shannon Paul for the Finance Administrative Assistant position in the Finance Offices in accordance with the offer letter of July 16, 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Readington Township to hire Shannon Paul for the Finance Administrative Assistant for the Finance Offices contingent upon successful completion of the requisite pre-employment physical.

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

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

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-126

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, there is a need in the Finance Office for part-time assistance; and

WHEREAS, Donna Mollineaux has the necessary qualifications to be appointed to a position as Temporary Part-time Finance Assistant; and

WHEREAS, Richard J. Sheola as Chief Financial Officer, has certified the availability of funds for this personnel action in account 4-01-103-111; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Township Committee appoints Donna Mollineaux, as Part-time Finance Assistant for Readington Township effective July 22, 2024 at the rate of \$90.00 per hour (working remotely) and a \$30.00 per diem if travel is involved.

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

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

Personnel / Museums

Mayor Mueller stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

Contract Negotiations / Shared Services / Finance

Mayor Mueller stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

Contract Negotiations / Award of Hunting Club Properties Bid (Block 25, Lot 50)

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-127

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Readington Township Committee (“Committee”) publicly advertised for hunting bids during the 2024-2025 season on Block 25, Lot 50 (Dreahook Road) in the Township, which property is a Green Acres-assisted, publicly-accessed property owned by the Township (hereinafter referred to as “the Property”); and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2024, the Municipal Clerk conducted the bid opening whereupon the total number of bidders for hunting on the Property was two (2); and

WHEREAS, upon review of the bids, the Municipal Clerk determined that the highest bid offered, \$5,227.00, was from Triple A Rod and Gun Club (hereinafter “Triple A”) and that the second highest bid, \$1,052.00, was from Double O Rod and Gun Club (“Double O”); and

WHEREAS, the bids were reviewed by the Township Attorney who found them to be complete; and

Resolution #R-2024-127 cont'd:

WHEREAS, the bids were referred to the Township’s Wildlife Advisory Committee for a recommendation and, upon review, it was determined that based on the prior performance of both the first and second highest bidders and the quantity of properties already hunted by the highest bidder Triple A Rod and Gun Club, and the fact that Triple A Rod and Gun Club was highest bidder on another property, that the bid for Dreahook Road, Block 25, Lot 50, should be awarded to the second highest bidder in this case, given all factors considered, as it would more likely accomplish the Township’s goal of harvesting more deer in order to better control the population in the Township and, therefore, would be in the best interests of the Township ; and

WHEREAS, according to the bid instructions, the Township reserved the right, insofar as consistent with the law, to reject any and all bids, to waive informalities, and to award the agreement in the best interests of the Township; accordingly, the Township Committee agrees with the recommendation of its Wildlife Advisory Committee with respect to awarding the bid for Double O, Block 25, Lot 50.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Township Committee hereby accepts the recommendation of its Wildlife Advisory Committee and rejects the bid received from the high bidder Triple A Rod & Gun Club for hunting deer on Block 25, Lot 50 and awards it, instead, to the second highest bidder Double O Rod and Gun Club in the amount of \$1,052.00 for the 2024-2025 hunting season for all the reasons set forth above, effective immediately.
2. The Municipal Clerk is authorized to notify all those who bid on the Property of this decision.

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

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

Contract Negotiations / Professional Services (Strategic Consulting & Government Affairs)

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-128

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, there exists a need in the Township of Readington for Professional Services; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contract Law (*N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.*) requires that the Resolution hiring a professional for professional services without competitive bids must be publicly advertised.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Readington as follows:

1. That the following contract has been awarded without competitive bidding as a "Professional Service" in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1) (a)* of the Local Public Contract Law because the services rendered or to be performed are by persons authorized by law to practice their profession:

Resolution #R-2024-128 cont'd:

- Hawke Strategies to represent the Township on strategic consulting and government affairs services relating to Solberg Airport Master Plan at a monthly rate of \$4,000 for five (5) months, not to exceed \$20,000.
2. Said contract shall expire on December 31, 2024.
 3. The Chief Financial Officer, has certified the availability of funds for this contract in account 4-01-101-212 and shall make the appropriate entry into the Township's accounting system pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-5.1 and 5.2.
 4. Copies of this Professional Service Contract are on file with the Municipal Clerk and are available there for public inspection.
 4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

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

Contract Negotiations / Block 55, Lot 34 (James)

Mayor Mueller stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

Contract Negotiations / Block 13, Lot 9 and Block 9, Lots 20 & 21

Mayor Mueller stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

Attorney-Client Privilege / Executive Session Minutes / July 1, 2024

A MOTION was made by Mr. Panico to approve the Executive Session Minutes of July 1, 2024 for content only, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Potential Litigation / Affordable Housing

Mayor Mueller stated that this matter remains in Executive Session.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Mueller 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.*

1. * **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** of meetings of July 1, 2024

2. * **Approval to Submit A Grant Application and Execute a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Pulaski Road - Section 5 Improvements Project**

The following resolution was offered as consideration:

#R-2024-129

Approval to submit a grant application and execute a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Pulaski Road – Section 5 Improvements project

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Readington formally approves the grant application for the above stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as *MA-2025-Pulaski Road-Section 5 -Improvements-00592* to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of the Township of Readington.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the Township of Readington and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

3. * **Release of Board of Health Escrow / Block 66, Lot 19.23 (Spy Lane)**
4. * **Application for Blue Light Permit (Ryan Levison)**
5. * **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	4-01	\$ 7,808,497.25
SEWER UTILITY OP FUND	4-02	\$ 305.20
GENERAL	G-01	\$ 434.50
OTHER TRUST	X-03	\$ 95.19
PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS	X-06	\$ 253,687.02
2022-14 VARIOUS CAPITAL	X-22	<u>\$ 5,585.00</u>
TOTAL OF ALL FUNDS		\$ 8,068,604.16

A MOTION was made by Mr. Albanese to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

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

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC for items listed on the agenda only

Bob Schoenfeld asked for clarification on the correspondence listed received from JCP&L and the grants listed under new business.

Emanuel Bola spoke in support of the submission of the grant application to fund the Pickell Park tennis/basketball court lighting replacement.

CORRESPONDENCE / OTHER INFORMATION

1. Public Notice from Kara Kaczynski, Esq. in *the Matter of a Township of Branchburg Planning Board Hearing on an Application or Amended Relief Relative to the Previously Approved Development of the Property located in the Township I-1 Zone*. No action taken.
2. Letter dated June 26, 2024 from Timothy McHugh, Counsel for Jersey Central Power & Light, in *the Matter of the Verified Petition of Jersey Central Power & Light Company Seeking Review and Approval of its Deferred Balances Relating to, and an Adjustment of, the Societal Benefits Charge Clause of its File Tariff*. No action taken.
3. Letter Dated June 18, 2024 from the Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners requesting *Support in Calling Upon the Veterans Administration to Create a Community Access Point in Hunterdon County*.

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-130

Calling Upon the Veterans Administration to Create a Community Access Point in Hunterdon County

WHEREAS, the Hunterdon County Commissioner Board recently contacted Congressman Tom Kean and U.S. Senators Cory Booker and Robert Menendez, for their collective help in getting the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to increase access to VA healthcare services within Hunterdon County; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has recently opened Community Access Point (CAP) centers in other counties in New Jersey, including Morris County; and

WHEREAS, residents currently residing in Hunterdon County must travel nearly an hour to seek care at either Lyons VA Medical Center in Somerset County or the Vet Center Outstation that recently opened in Hackettstown in Warren County; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a CAP in Hunterdon County has been a major priority for veterans-based organizations in Hunterdon County including the VFW and American Legion; and

WHEREAS, to help facilitate the establishment of a CAP in Hunterdon County, the Commissioner Board is willing to provide office space free of charge to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Township of Readington does hereby support the Hunterdon County Commissioner Board's call for the creation of a VA Community Access Point in Hunterdon County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to Congressman Tom Kean and U.S. Senators Cory Booker and Robert Menendez.

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

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

4. Letter dated July 16, 2024 from Katelyn Vettel, Deputy Clerk, Township of Bedminster, regarding *An Ordinance Amending Section 13-400 Entitled "District Regulations" and Adding Section 13-401.3 Entitled "Lot Coverage Standards for All Single-Family Residential Uses"*. No action taken.

OLD BUSINESS

1. *An Ordinance of the Township of Readington Repealing and Replacing Article XII "Sign Requirements and Regulations" of Chapter 148 "Land Development"*

The following ordinance was offered for introduction:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON REPEALING AND REPLACING
ARTICLE XII "SIGN REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS" OF CHAPTER 148 "LAND
DEVELOPMENT"**

Ordinance #23-2024

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the Township of Readington and its residents to update the sign requirements and regulations from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the existing sign requirements and regulations have been reviewed and revised by the Township Planner.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Committee of Readington Township as follows:

Section I

Article XII (Sign Requirements and Regulations) of Chapter 148 (Land Development) is hereby repealed in its entirety and replaced with the following:

§ 148-112. Short title.

This article shall be known as the "Sign Regulations of the Township of Readington, Hunterdon County, New Jersey."

§ 148-113. Purpose, intent and scope

It is the purpose of this article to promote the public health, safety and general welfare through reasonable, consistent and nondiscriminatory sign standards. The sign regulations in this article are not intended to censor speech or to regulate viewpoints, but instead are intended to regulate the secondary effects of speech, and especially insofar as those secondary effects may adversely affect aesthetics and traffic and pedestrian safety. In order to preserve and enhance the Township as a desirable community in which to live and do business, a pleasing, visually attractive environment is of foremost importance. The regulation of signs within the Township is a highly contributive means by which to achieve this desired end. These sign regulations have been prepared with the intent of protecting and enhancing the visual character of the Township and promoting its continued well-being, and are intended to:

- A. Encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication in the Township;
- B. Maintain and enhance the aesthetic character, both visually and spatially, and the Township's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth;
- C. Improve pedestrian and traffic safety;
- D. Minimize the possible adverse effect of signs on nearby public and private property;
- E. Foster the integration of signage with architectural and landscape designs;

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

- F. Lessen the visual clutter that may otherwise be caused by the proliferation, improper placement, illumination, animation, excessive height and excessive size (area) of signs which compete for the attention of pedestrian and vehicular traffic;
- G. Allow signs that are compatible with their surroundings and aid orientation, while precluding the placement of signs that contribute to sign clutter or that conceal or obstruct adjacent land uses or signs;
- H. Encourage and allow signs that are appropriate to the zoning district in which they are located and consistent with the category of use and function to which they pertain;
- I. Curtail the size and number of signs and sign messages to the minimum reasonably necessary to identify a residential or business location and the nature of any such business;
- J. Establish sign size in relationship to the scale of the lot and building on which the sign is to be placed or to which it pertains;
- K. Categorize signs based upon the function that they serve and tailor the regulation of signs based upon their function;
- L. Preclude signs from conflicting with the principal permitted use of the site and adjoining sites;
- M. Regulate signs in a manner so as to not interfere with, obstruct the vision of or distract motorists, bicyclists or pedestrians;
- N. Except to the extent expressly preempted by state or federal law, ensure that signs are constructed, installed and maintained in a safe and satisfactory manner, and protect the public from unsafe signs;
- O. Preserve, conserve, protect and enhance the aesthetic quality and scenic beauty of all districts of the Township;
- P. Allow for traffic control devices consistent with national standards and whose purpose is to promote highway safety and efficiency by providing for the orderly movement of road users on streets and highways, and that notify road users of regulations and provide warning and guidance needed for the safe, uniform and efficient operation of all elements of the traffic stream;
- Q. Protect property values by precluding to the maximum extent possible sign types that create a nuisance to the occupancy or use of other properties as a result of their size, height, illumination, brightness or movement;
- R. Protect property values by ensuring that sign types, as well as the number of signs, are in harmony with buildings, neighborhoods and conforming signs in the area;
- S. Regulate the appearance and design of signs in a manner that promotes and enhances the beautification of the Township and that complements the natural surroundings in recognition of the Township's reliance on its natural surroundings and beautification efforts in retaining economic advantage for the community;
- T. Preserve and enhance the rural and historic character of the Township; and
- U. Enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these sign regulations.

§ 148-114. Prohibited signs

The following signs and sign types are prohibited within the Township and shall not be erected. Any lawfully existing permanent sign or sign type that is among the prohibited signs and sign types listed below shall be deemed a nonconforming sign subject to the provisions of § 148-15.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

- A. Signs constituting a principal use or structure
- B. Billboards.
- C. Revolving signs.
- D. Flashing, sparkling or glittering signs.
- E. Animated signs.
- F. Wind signs.
- G. Portable signs.
- H. Roof signs.
- I. Abandoned and discontinued signs.
- J. Snipe signs; bandit signs.
- K. Projecting signs, except as expressly allowed.
- L. Bus bench advertising signs; bus shelter advertising signs.
- M. Signs that emit smoke, visible vapor or smoke, sound, odor, or visible particles or gaseous matter.
- N. Signs that have unshielded illuminating devices and/or that do not fully comply with § 148-67, the Township's lighting ordinance regulations.
- O. Signs that obstruct, conceal, hide or otherwise obscure from view any official traffic or governmental sign, signal or device.
- P. Signs within a sight triangle.
- Q. Signs in the public right-of-way, other than traffic control device signs, warning signs or safety signs.
- R. Signs other than a traffic control device sign that use the word "stop" or "danger," or present or imply the need or requirement of stopping or the existence of danger, or which copy or imitate any official traffic control device signs, and which are adjacent to the right-of-way of any road, street or highway.
- S. Signs prohibited by state or federal law.
- T. Vehicle sign or signs which have a total sign area on any vehicle in excess of 10 square feet, when the vehicle is not regularly used in the conduct of the business or activity advertised on the vehicle, and is visible from a street right-of-way within 100 feet of the vehicle, and is parked for more than five consecutive hours within 100 feet of any street right-of-way. A vehicle shall not be considered "regularly used in the conduct of the business or activity" if the vehicle is used primarily for advertising, or for the purpose of advertising, or for the purpose of providing transportation for owners or employees of the business or activity advertised on the vehicle.
- U. Signs located on real property without the permission of the property owner.
- V. Beacon signs, except as required by federal or state law.
- W. Intermittent signs.
- X. Signs located, painted or affixed on a water tower, storage tower, communications tower or other utility structure that are visible from a public street or roadway.
- Y. Signs with changeable copy/graphics that exhibit the following characteristics:
 - (1) Transition between messages using scrolling, fading, dissolving, pixilation, zooming, wiping, moving copy or any graphic effect other than an instantaneous static replacement of the message.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

§ 148-115. Nonconforming signs

A nonconforming sign that was lawfully erected may continue to be maintained until the nonconforming sign is substantially damaged or destroyed. At such time that the nonconforming sign is substantially damaged or destroyed, the nonconforming sign must either be removed or be brought into conformity with this article and with any other applicable law or regulation.

§ 148-116. Exemptions

This article does not pertain to the following:

- A. A sign, other than a window sign, located entirely inside the premises of a building or enclosed space.
- B. A sign on a car, other than a prohibited vehicle sign or signs.
- C. A statutory sign.
- D. A traffic control device sign.
- E. Any sign not visible from a public street, sidewalk or right-of-way, except that the foregoing does not exempt a sign in a nonresidential zone district that is visible from an abutting residential property or use.

§ 148-116.1. Permits

- A. Building permits. It shall be unlawful for any person or business or the person in charge of the business to erect, construct or alter a permanent sign structure whose construction is subject to the New Jersey Uniform Construction Ordinance, without first obtaining such building permit from the Township as may be required by the New Jersey Uniform Construction Ordinance. Permit fees, if any, shall be paid in accordance with the applicable fee schedules. The requirement of a building permit under the New Jersey Uniform Construction Ordinance is separate and independent of the requirement for a sign permit under this article.
- B. Sign permits.

Permitted temporary signs shall be exempt from sign permitting hereunder. Permitted permanent signs of the type described in § 148-116.8 of this article shall be exempt from sign permitting hereunder.

 - (1) No sign permit shall be issued for the erection of a prohibited sign.
 - (2) Unless exempt from permitting as provided in § 148-116.8 of this article, no permanent sign shall be erected, altered, relocated, maintained or displayed until a sign permit is obtained from, and the appropriate fee, if any, is paid to the Township.
 - (3) A sign lawfully erected under permit may be repainted or have ordinary and customary repairs performed, including replacement of plastic or glass panels, without a new sign permit; however, if such sign is to be structurally altered in any manner, a new sign permit shall be required, and the altered sign must meet all requirements of this article and this chapter.
- C. Sign permit application and issuance of sign permit.
 - (1) A sign permit shall be required for permanent signs that are not otherwise exempt from permitting. A sign permit application shall be made upon a form provided by the Township. The sign permit application is in addition to any building permit application required by the New Jersey Uniform Construction Ordinance. The sign permit application shall be accompanied by plans and specifications drawn to scale, together with any site plan required by this article or this chapter. The applicant shall furnish the following information on or with the sign permit application form:

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

- (a) The block, lot and street address of the real property where the sign is proposed to be located.
 - (b) The zoning district for the real property on which the sign will be located.
 - (c) The name, mailing address and telephone number (where available) of the owner(s) of the real property where the sign is proposed to be located.
 - (d) A notarized statement of authorization signed by the owner(s) consenting to the placement of the proposed sign on the real property.
 - (e) The name, mailing address and telephone number of the sign contractor.
 - (f) Type of proposed sign (e.g., facade sign or freestanding sign).
 - (g) The proposed sign area.
 - (h) The cost of the proposed sign.
 - (i) If the proposed sign is a freestanding sign:
 - [1] The height of the proposed freestanding sign.
 - [2] The sign area of the freestanding sign and the dimensions utilized to calculate the size.
 - [3] The distance between the closest existing freestanding sign and the proposed freestanding sign as measured in each direction along each abutting street or right-of-way.
 - [4] The location, height and area of any existing freestanding sign on the same lot where the proposed freestanding sign will be located.
 - [5] The front and side yard setbacks for the proposed sign.
 - (j) If the proposed sign is an attached sign, the building frontage for the building to which the attached sign shall be affixed.
 - (k) The number, type, location and surface area for all existing signs on the same lot and/or building on which the sign will be located.
 - (l) Whether the proposed sign will be an illuminated or nonilluminated sign.
- (2) An applicant shall deliver a sign permit application for a permanent sign to the Township's Zoning Officer or his or her designee, or such other person as designated by the Township. The sign permit application shall be reviewed for a determination of whether the proposed sign meets the applicable requirements of this article and any applicable zoning law. The review of the sign permit application shall be completed within 10 calendar days from the date of receipt of the application, and the application shall be granted or denied within that time frame. In the event that no decision is rendered within 10 calendar days following submission, the application shall be deemed granted; however, the application shall be deemed denied if the application is for a prohibited sign, and the applicant may appeal to the Board of Adjustment pursuant to the MLUL.

D. Fees.

- (1) Sign permit fees. Every person making an initial application for a sign permit shall pay a sign permit fee to the Township at the time of the application. This sign permit fee shall be deemed a zoning permit fee and shall be in accordance with the zoning permit fee schedule set forth in Article XI of this chapter.
- (2) Building permit fees distinguished. The sign permit fee, if any, shall be separate and apart from any required fee for a building permit for the erection of a sign covered by the New Jersey Uniform Construction Ordinance.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

E. Conditions.

- (1) Duration of permit. If the work authorized under a sign permit has not been completed within 180 days after the date of issuance, the permit shall become null and void and a new application for a sign permit shall be required.
- (2) Maintenance of signs.
 - (a) All visible portions of a sign and its supporting structure shall be maintained in a safe condition and neat appearance according to the following:
 - [1] If the sign is lighted, all lights shall be maintained in working order and functioning in a safe manner.
 - [2] If the sign is painted, the painted surface shall be kept in good condition.
 - [3] Every sign shall be kept in such manner as to constitute a complete or whole sign.
 - (b) Lawfully erected nonconforming signs may suffer only ordinary and customary repairs and maintenance. A lawfully erected nonconforming sign shall not be structurally altered except in full conformance with this article.
- (3) Unlawful cutting of trees or shrubs. No person may, for the purpose of increasing or enhancing the visibility of any sign, damage, trim, destroy or remove any trees, shrubs or other vegetation located:
 - (a) Within the right-of-way of any public street or road, unless the work is done pursuant to the express written authorization of the Township or agency having jurisdiction over the streets.
 - (b) On property that is not under the ownership or control of the person doing or responsible for such work, unless the work is done pursuant to the express authorization of the person owning the property where such trees or shrubs are located.

§ 148-116.2. Sign illumination

The illumination of signs, where allowed, shall comply with §148-67 of the Land Development Ordinance of Readington Township.

§ 148-116.3. Substitution of noncommercial speech for commercial speech

Notwithstanding anything contained in this article or this chapter to the contrary, any sign erected pursuant to the provisions of this article or this chapter with a commercial message may, at the option of the owner, contain a noncommercial message unrelated to the business located on the premises where the sign is erected. The noncommercial message may occupy the entire sign face or any portion thereof. The sign face may be changed from a commercial to a noncommercial message, or from one noncommercial message to another, as frequently as desired by the owner of the sign, provided that the sign is not a prohibited sign or sign type, and provided that the size, height, setback and other dimensional criteria contained in this article and this chapter have been satisfied.

§ 148-116.4. Content neutrality as to sign message (viewpoint)

Notwithstanding anything in this article or this chapter to the contrary, no sign or sign structure shall be subject to any limitation based upon the content (viewpoint) of the message contained on such sign or displayed on such sign structure.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

§ 148-116.5. Setback measurement

Required setbacks for signs in all zoning districts shall be measured from the property line to the nearest part of the sign.

§ 148-116.6. Double-faced signs

Double-faced signs shall be permitted in all zoning districts, provided the signs are designed and constructed such that the two sign faces are back-to-back with a maximum distance of 18 inches between the two sign faces and directionally oriented 180 degrees from each other. The maximum sign area allowed shall be permitted for each sign face.

§ 148-116.7. Applicability; permitted signs

The regulations in this article apply in every zoning district, except where otherwise specified or indicated. Sign permits are not required for the signs and sign types described and identified in this section.

- A. Street address signs. For each parcel, residence or business, one street address sign may be displayed. For each residence, the street address sign shall not exceed two square feet in sign area unless required by applicable law. For each business or parcel in nonresidential use, the street address sign shall not exceed six square feet in sign area unless required by applicable law.
- B. Nameplate or occupant identification signs. For each residence, business or other occupancy, one nameplate sign may be displayed. For residences, the nameplate or occupant identification signs shall not exceed two square feet in sign area. For any nonresidential use, the nameplate or occupant identification sign shall not exceed six square feet in sign area.
- C. Directional signs. Noncommercial on-site directional signs, not exceeding 2.5 square feet in sign area and 3.5 feet in height, shall be allowed on each parcel.
- D. Parking space signs. Noncommercial on-site parking space number signs, not exceeding one square foot of sign area, shall be for a noncommercial use having multiple parking spaces on site. One such sign shall be allowed for each parking space.
- E. Flagpoles. One freestanding flagpole is permitted on each lot. A flagpole shall not exceed 35 feet in height and shall be subject to required minimum setbacks for accessory structures in the applicable zones in which it is located. All buildings may have a building-mounted flagpole.
- F. Flags. For each freestanding flagpole, up to three flags, each having a maximum sign area of 60 square feet may be displayed. For each building-mounted flagpole, one flag may be displayed with a maximum sign area of 60 square feet.
- G. Warning signs and safety signs. Warning signs and safety signs, not exceeding four square feet in sign area, shall be allowed in all districts.
- H. Temporary Signs. Temporary signs, either freestanding or attached to a building or structure, are permitted in all zones. The maximum size of a temporary sign shall be 32 square feet. The maximum duration for the display of a temporary sign shall be 60 days. In order to document conformance with the permitted display duration of a temporary sign, the date upon which the sign was first displayed shall be indicated on the rear of the sign or in a corner of the sign face. Temporary signs that do not display the date the display period started will be presumed to have exceeded the maximum permitted display period. Temporary freestanding signs in nonresidential and mixed-use districts shall have a minimum distance of 50 feet between each sign. For multitenant buildings within a nonresidential or mixed-use district, each tenant shall be permitted to have one temporary façade sign.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

- I. Temporary window signs. For each lot, one or more temporary window signs may be displayed. On lots within single-family residential zones, the temporary window sign(s) shall not exceed an aggregate of three square feet in sign area. On lots that are in nonresidential or mixed residential-nonresidential zones, the temporary window sign(s) shall not exceed an aggregate of 24 square feet in sign area. Temporary window signs shall not cover more than 25% of any window surface. The maximum duration for the display of a temporary window sign shall be 60 days. In order to document conformance with the permitted display duration of a temporary window sign, the date upon which the sign was first displayed shall be indicated on the rear of the sign or in a corner of the sign face. Temporary window signs that do not display the date the display period started will be presumed to have exceeded the permitted display period.

§ 148-116.8. Signs Permitted in Residential districts

In addition to the permanent and temporary signs and sign types that are permitted pursuant to § 148-116.8 of this article, the following permanent signs are permitted within the following residential zones. The permanent signs described below require a sign permit.

- A. AR Agricultural Residential and RR Rural Residential Zoning Districts. On lots of six acres or greater, one permanent freestanding and one permanent building mounted sign is permitted. Freestanding signs shall be set back at least 10 feet from any property line. The maximum permitted sign area for both freestanding and facade signs shall be 32 square feet each. The maximum height of a freestanding sign shall be six feet.

§ 148-116.9. Signs permitted in Nonresidential and Mixed-Use districts

In addition to the permanent and temporary signs and sign types that are permitted pursuant to §148-116.8 of this article, the following permanent signs are also permitted within the following zone districts. The permanent signs described below require a sign permit.

- A. B Business and PO Professional Office Zone Districts. One permitted freestanding sign based on the following schedule:
 - (1) For lots less than two acres in size, a freestanding sign shall not exceed 20 square feet in area.
 - (2) For lots from two acres to less than five acres in size, a freestanding sign shall not exceed 35 square feet in area.
 - (3) For lots five acres or greater in size, a freestanding sign shall not exceed 50 square feet in area.
 - (4) Freestanding signs shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from any property line.
 - (5) The height of a freestanding sign shall not exceed eight feet above the street pavement elevation.
 - (6) The freestanding sign for a multitenant center or building (three or more tenants) shall contain only the name or name and address of the center.
 - (7) Facade signs shall be permitted based on the following schedule:
 - (a) Single-tenanted buildings shall be permitted one facade sign not to exceed one square foot of sign area per linear foot of the front building facade, not to exceed 24 square feet. If no freestanding sign exists or is proposed, the area of the facade sign may be increased, provided that the amount of the increase does not exceed the maximum permitted sign area that would have otherwise been allowed for a freestanding sign.
 - (b) One blade sign shall be permitted for a single-tenanted building.
 - (c) For multitenant buildings, one blade sign per tenant shall be permitted.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

- (d) For multitenant buildings where the primary entrance to each tenant's space is directly from the exterior of the building, one facade sign per tenant shall be permitted that does not exceed one square foot of sign area per linear foot of the facade of the space occupied by the business that contains the main entrance to the business' portion of the building, but sign area shall not exceed 12 square feet.
- (e) For multitenant buildings where the primary entrances to each business' space is from an internal lobby, hallway or common area, individual businesses shall not be permitted to have an external facade sign unless the business has a private customer or client entrance to the exterior. In this case, one facade sign shall be placed immediately adjacent to the private external entrance and shall not exceed six square feet in area. Anchor businesses with major external entrances shall be permitted one facade sign per major entrance not to exceed 24 square feet in area. At the main common entrances multitenant buildings, one facade sign per such entrance shall be permitted to indicate the name of the center or building and shall not exceed 24 square feet in area.

[1] Within multitenant buildings and multibuilding complexes, the signs shall be of the same construction type and uniform in design, letter type and colors used.

[2] Within multibuilding complexes, on-site directory signs shall be permitted as approved by the Board; each sign shall not exceed 12 square feet in size and six feet in height.

B. VC Village Commercial and VH Village Hospitality Zones.

- (1) One freestanding sign shall be permitted per lot that does not exceed 20 square feet in area. Freestanding signs shall not exceed six feet in height and shall be located a minimum of two feet from a sidewalk or from the edge of road pavement, whichever is greater.
- (2) One facade sign per building is permitted that does not exceed a total of one square foot of sign area per linear foot of the front facade and shall not be located above the first floor of the building
- (3) One blade sign shall be permitted for a single-tenanted building.
- (4) For multitenant buildings, one blade sign per tenant shall be permitted.
- (5) Signs in this zone shall be oriented to pedestrian traffic and shall be designed to complement the architecture of the building.
- (6) Sandwich board sign. Each property in the VC Zone may have one sandwich board sign that does not exceed a height of three feet and an area of six square feet.

C. ROM-1 Research Office Manufacturing-1, ROM-2 Research Office Manufacturing-2 and RO Research Office Zones.

- (1) One permitted freestanding sign is permitted per road frontage, not to exceed two freestanding signs, based on the following:
 - (a) For lots less than 10 acres in size, a freestanding sign may have an area not exceeding one square foot per five linear feet of road frontage and not exceeding 35 square feet in size.
 - (b) For lots 10 acres in size or greater, a freestanding sign may have an area not exceeding equal to one square foot per five linear feet of road frontage and not exceeding 50 square feet in size.
 - (c) Where developments contain three or more tenants or uses on one lot, the freestanding sign shall contain only the name of the development or the name and address of the development.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

- (d) Freestanding signs shall be set back a minimum of 50 feet from the street right-of-way and shall not exceed eight feet in height above the grade.
- (2) Facade signs shall be permitted based on the following schedule:
 - (a) Single-tenant buildings shall be permitted one facade sign at the main entrance with a maximum permitted sign area equal to one square foot per linear foot of the front building facade, not to exceed 24 square feet.
 - (b) For multitenant buildings where the primary entrance to each business' space is directly from the exterior of the building, one facade sign per business shall be permitted that does not exceed one square foot of sign area per linear foot of facade of the business space containing the main entrance to the business' portion of the building, not to exceed 12 square feet.
 - (c) For multitenant buildings where the primary entrance to each business' space is from an internal lobby, hallway or common area, individual business signs shall not be permitted. One facade sign identifying the building shall be permitted and shall not exceed six square feet in sign area.
- (3) Within multibuilding complexes, on-site directory signs shall be permitted as approved by the Board; each sign shall not exceed 12 square feet in size and six feet in height.
- (4) Incidental signs. Up to four incidental signs are permitted to be attached to a freestanding sign structure or to a building wall, but not perpendicular to the wall. An incidental sign shall not exceed one square foot in area.

§ 148-116.10. Administration and enforcement

- A. The Zoning Officer shall be the enforcing official of this article.
- B. Whenever a temporary sign is erected or maintained in violation of this article, the Zoning Officer may remove the same at any time without notice.
- C. Whenever a temporary sign is erected or posted on public property in violation of this article, the same shall be considered litter and may be removed at any time.
- D. Whenever a permanent sign is erected or maintained in violation of this article or any other provision of this chapter, or whenever in the opinion of the Zoning Officer any sign becomes unsafe or endangers the safety of a building or premises or the public safety, the Zoning Officer shall send a letter by certified mail to the owner of said sign and/or the owner of the premises on which the sign is located, ordering that such sign be brought into conformance or removed within 30 days of receipt of the letter. If the sign is not brought into conformity or removed by the end of the thirty-day period, the Zoning Officer may cause the same to be removed at the expense of the owner of the sign and the owner of the premises on which the sign is located.
- E. The Zoning Officer may cause any sign or sign structure to be removed summarily and without written notice at the expense of the owner of the sign and the owner of the premises on which the sign is located, if it is an immediate peril to persons or property by virtue of its construction or moorings.

§ 148-116.11. Appeals to Board of Adjustment

Whenever it is alleged that there has been an error in any order, action, decision, determination or requirement by an administrative official in the enforcement and application of any provision contained within this article (including any allegation that an administrative official has failed to act within applicable time frames), the aggrieved party shall file a written appeal with the Board of Adjustment in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-

70. The appellate decisions of the Board of Adjustment shall be deemed final, subject to judicial review as provided by law.

Ordinance #23-2024 cont'd:

§ 148-116.12. Violations and penalties

Any person, firm or corporation who shall violate, disobey, omit, neglect or refuse to comply with any provision of this article shall be, upon conviction thereof, liable to all of the penalties set forth in § 148-124, except imprisonment.

§ 148-116.13. Effect on existing permits

Any permit issued prior to the effective date of the adoption of the sign regulations that comprise this article shall remain valid until the earlier of the date that said permit expires by its own terms or 90 days after the effective date of the adoption of this article.

§ 148-116.14. Severability

- A. Generally; severability where less speech results. If any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term or word of this article is declared or held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration or holding shall not affect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term or word of this article, even if such severability would result in less speech, whether by subjecting previously exempt signs to this article's permitting requirements, or otherwise.
- B. Severability of provisions pertaining to billboards and other prohibited signs and sign types. Without diminishing or limiting in any way the declaration of severability set forth above or elsewhere in this article, this chapter or in any adopting ordinance, if any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term or word of this article or any other law is declared or held to be unconstitutional or invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration or holding shall not affect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term or word of this article that pertains to prohibited signs, including, specifically, the prohibition on billboards and those signs and sign types prohibited and not allowed under § 148-114 of this article.

Section II

All ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

Section III

If any section, paragraph, subdivision, clause or provision of this Ordinance shall be adjudged invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to this section, paragraph, subdivision, clause or provision and the remainder of this Ordinance shall be deemed valid and effective.

Section IV

This ordinance shall take effect upon adoption and publication in the manner required by New Jersey general law.

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

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

The Public Hearing was scheduled for September 3, 2024 at 7:45 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

1. ***Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of a Pierce Aerial Ladder for Whitehouse Fire Company***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-131

***AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF PIERCE AERIAL LADDER FOR
WHITEHOUSE STATION FIRE COMPANY***

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington wishes to purchase a new Pierce Enforcer 107 foot ladder fire apparatus to replace an out-of-date vehicle; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 52:34-6.2 (b) P.L. 2011, c. 139 was enacted into law permitting agencies to use national purchasing cooperatives; and

WHEREAS, the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGACBuy) maintains National Cooperative Purchasing Agreement Contracts, which are competitively awarded nationally leveraged cooperative purchasing contracts, through which members can make purchases; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington is a member of HGACBuy as authorized by N.J.S.A. 52:34-6.2; and

WHEREAS, Pierce Manufacturing, Inc of Appleton, WI has been awarded H-GAC's Contract #FS12-23 and the local dealer is Fire & Safety Services, 200 Ryan Street, South Plainfield, NJ 07080; and

WHEREAS, the Whitehouse Station Fire Company was not able to find a suitable or similar replacement for the ladder truck under a NJ State Contract; and

WHEREAS, the Township Qualified Purchasing Agent has determined that the HGACBuy Contract #FS12-23 best meets the needs of the Township to purchase one (1) New/unused model year 2023 or newer fire apparatus for a total cost of \$1,563,636.16; and

WHEREAS, information regarding the contract may be found at the Township of Readington during regular business hours, as well as on the HGACBuy website at <https://www.hgacbuy.org/products-and-services>; and

WHEREAS, as required the Notice of Intent to Award Contract under a National Cooperative Purchasing Agreement was published on June 30, 2024 and no objections have been received to date; and

WHEREAS, H-GAC has reviewed the quote provided by Fire & Safety Services through H-GAC's Contract FS12-23 and finds the pricing to be in compliance with the terms of the contract.

WHEREAS, Richard J. Sheola as Chief Financial Officer, has certified the availability of funds for this contract in account X-24-020-001 (\$1,463,636.16) and X-24-020-002 (\$100,000.00) and shall make the appropriate entry into the Township's accounting system pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-5.1 and 5.2.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, does hereby award the contract in the amount of \$1,563,636.16 pursuant to the proposal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution and the purchase order for this award shall be forwarded to H-GAC so the necessary order confirmation can be prepared by them and sent to the contractor as authorization to proceed.

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

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

2. ***Resolution to Authorize the Submission of a Grant Application to Fund Pickell Park Tennis/Basketball Court Lighting Replacement***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-132

***TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION***

WHEREAS, the Hunterdon County Open Space, Farmland & Historic Preservation Trust Fund (“County Open Space Trust Fund”), provides matching grants to municipal government and to nonprofit organizations for assistance in the development or redevelopment or of outdoor municipal recreation facilities; and,

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington desires to further the public interest by obtaining a matching grant of \$150,000 from the County Trust Fund to fund the following project: Pickell Park Tennis/Basketball Court Lighting Replacement with Musco Light-Structure Lighting System, LED technology, player-activated pushbutton control, remote control monitoring system, guaranteed light levels for 25 years, 25 year warranty that includes parts and onsite labor; and,

WHEREAS, the governing body/board has reviewed the Municipal Park and Recreation Grant Program application and instructions, and desires to make an application for such a matching grant and provide application information and furnish such documents as may be required; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Hunterdon shall determine whether the application is complete and in conformance with the scope and intent of the Municipal Park and Recreation Grant Program and the Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund; and

WHEREAS, the applicant is willing to use the County Open Space Trust Fund in accordance with such rules, regulations and applicable statutes, and is willing to inter into an agreement with the County of Hunterdon for the above named project and unsure its completion on or about the project contract expiration date.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township of Readington:

1. That it is hereby authorized to submit the above completed project application to the County by the deadline of September 20th, 2024, as established by the County; and,
2. That, in the event of a County Trust Fund award that may be less than the grant amount requested above, the Township of Readington has, or will secure, the balance of funding necessary to complete the project, or modify the project as necessary; and,
3. That the Township of Readington is committed to providing a 25% cash match for the project; and,
4. That only those park improvements identified and approved in the project application, its Project contract, or other documentation will be considered eligible for reimbursement.
5. That the Township of Readington agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations in its performance of the project; and,
6. That this resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

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

3. **Resolution Authorizing Disposal of Surplus Property**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-133

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington is the owner of certain surplus property which is no longer needed for public use; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington is desirous of selling said surplus property in an “as is” condition without express or implied warranties.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township of Readington as follows:

1. The sale of the surplus property shall be conducted through Municibid pursuant to State Contract #19-GNSV1-00696 in accordance with the terms and conditions of the State Contract. The terms and conditions of the agreement entered into with Municibid are available online at municibid.com and also available from the Township of Readington.
2. The sale will be conducted online and the address of the auction site is municibid.com
3. The sale is being conducted pursuant to Local Finance Notice 2008-09.
4. A list of the surplus property to be sold is as follows:

Year of Equip	Make	Model	Serial # or VIN	Item description
1997	Ford	F-800	1FDYF80E7VVA28914	Dump Truck
1998	Chevrolet	2500	1GCGK24R8WE186671	Pickup Truck
1991	John Deere	310D	T0310DG782461	Backhoe
2002	Border Patrol	Ice Skating Rink	12157	Ice Skating Rink
n/a	Meyers	n/a	n/a	Lot of Misc. Meyers snowplow Mounts & Plow Pumps
2006	Ford	F-250	1FTSX21546ED26552	Pickup Truck
2008	Ford	F-250	1FTSX215X8EA18045	Pickup Truck
2003	Ford	F-550	1FDAF57P53ED58250	Mason Dump
2002	Ford	F-550	1FDAF57F32EC78872	Mason Dump
2011	ODB	n/a	1Z9PL161XAR168197	Extreme Vac
2010	Ford	Crown Vic	2FABP7BV1BX102231	Passenger Vehicle
2009	Ford	Crown Vic	2FABP7BV3AX111303	Passenger Vehicle
2004	Ford	Crown Vic	2FAFP71W95X106270	Passenger Vehicle
1992	Ford	F-350	2FDJF37H6NCA94316	Service Truck

5. The surplus property as identified shall be sold in an “as-is” condition without express or implied warranties with the successful bidder required to execute a Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreement concerning use of said surplus property.

Resolution #2024-133 cont'd:

6. The Township of Readington reserves the right to accept or reject any bid submitted.

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

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

4. **Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, in Support of \$3,000,000 Community Project Funding Grant for the Expansion and Modernization of the Readington Township Police Facilities**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-134

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, IN SUPPORT OF A \$3,000,000 COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING GRANT FOR THE EXPANSION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE READINGTON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

WHEREAS, Readington Township, established in 1730 and covering nearly 50 square miles, is the largest township in Hunterdon County, with a current population exceeding 16,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, the Readington Township Police Department, consisting of 32 officers and 3 civilian employees, operates out of a 4,500-square-foot facility built in 2000 that has not been updated since its construction; and

WHEREAS, the current police facilities are inadequate to meet the operational needs of the department, lacking sufficient space and modern infrastructure, which hinders the department's ability to effectively serve the community; and

WHEREAS, the township is experiencing significant growth due to the addition of 881 new housing units, including 355 affordable units, as part of the New Jersey Supreme Court Affordable Housing mandate, resulting in a 14% increase in the housing stock and placing additional demands on the police department; and

WHEREAS, the increased population and housing density necessitate the expansion and modernization of the police department facilities to ensure the safety and security of all residents; and

WHEREAS, the proposed \$3,000,000 Community Project Funding grant will provide essential resources to expand and upgrade the police facilities, thereby enhancing operational capacity, improving working conditions for officers, and ensuring compliance with state mandates; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Readington is committed to supporting the police department in its mission to maintain public safety and foster a sense of security and trust within the community;

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

Resolution #R-2024-134 cont'd:

Support: The Township Committee hereby expresses its full support for the \$3,000,000 Community Project Funding grant for the expansion and modernization of the Readington Township Police Department facilities.

Advocacy: The Township Committee urges Congressman Tom Kean Jr. to support and advocate for this funding request to ensure the project is included among the Fiscal Year 2025 Community Project Funding beneficiaries.

Commitment: The Township Committee reaffirms its commitment to providing the necessary resources and support to the Readington Township Police Department to enhance public safety and meet the needs of our growing community.

Implementation: The Township Committee directs the appropriate municipal officials to take all necessary actions to facilitate the application and securing of the Community Project Funding grant.

Communication: The Township Clerk is hereby directed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to Congressman Tom Kean Jr., the Readington Township Police Department, and any other relevant parties.

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

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

5. ***Resolution of the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, Hunterdon County, New Jersey, in Support of \$4,000,000 Grant for the Department of Public Works Facility***

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-135

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, IN SUPPORT OF A \$4,000,000 COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING GRANT FOR THE EXPANSION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE READINGTON TOWNSHIP DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FACILITIES

WHEREAS, Readington Township, established in 1730 and covering nearly 50 square miles, is the largest municipality in Hunterdon County, with a current population exceeding 16,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, the Readington Township Department of Public Works (DPW), consisting of 20 staff and four (4) administrative employees, operates out of a facility built in 1972 that has not been updated since its construction; and

WHEREAS, the current DPW facilities are inadequate to meet the operational needs of the department, lacking sufficient space and modern infrastructure, which hinders the department's ability to effectively serve the community; and

WHEREAS, the township is experiencing significant growth due to the addition of 881 new housing units, including 355 affordable units, as part of the New Jersey Supreme Court Affordable Housing mandate, resulting in a 14% increase in the housing stock and placing additional demands on the department with increased road miles and various accoutrements; and

Resolution #R-2024-135 cont'd:

WHEREAS, the increased population and housing density necessitate the expansion and modernization of the DPW facilities to ensure the proper maintenance of all roads, parks and facilities within the township; and

WHEREAS, the proposed \$4,000,000 Community Project Funding grant will provide essential resources to expand and upgrade the DPW facilities, thereby enhancing operational capacity, improving working conditions for staff and ensuring compliance with state mandates; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of the Township of Readington is committed to supporting the DPW in its mission to maintain provide safe passage on township roads, maintain the various parks and recreational facilities and the operational effectiveness of the sanitary sewer system;

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

Support: The Township Committee hereby expresses its full support for the \$4,000,000 Community Project Funding grant for the expansion and modernization of the Readington Township Department of Public Works facilities.

Advocacy: The Township Committee urges Senator Cory Booker to support and advocate for this funding request to ensure the project is included among the Fiscal Year 2025 Community Project Funding beneficiaries.

Commitment: The Township Committee reaffirms its commitment to providing the necessary resources and support to the Readington Township Department of Public Works to enhance public safety and meet the needs of our growing community.

Implementation: The Township Committee directs the appropriate municipal officials to take all necessary actions to facilitate the application and securing of the Community Project Funding grant.

Communication: The Township Clerk is hereby directed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to Senator Cory Booker, the Readington Township Department of Public Works, and any other relevant parties.

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

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

6. **Resolution in Recognition of Donation from Whitehouse Mall, LLC to the Township of Readington Police Department**

The Committee thanked Mr. DeMattheis for his generous donation.

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-136

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, Whitehouse Mall, LLC wishes to donate \$2,500.00 to the Township of Readington Police Department toward the purchase of a special camera; and

Resolution #R-2024-136 cont'd:

WHEREAS, given that police officers frequently conduct complex criminal investigations that require the documentation of a crime or accident scene;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Township Committee of Readington Township hereby accepts the generous donation from Mark DeMattheis and thanks him for his contribution toward the Police Department and their efforts to provide the best possible police service for the community.

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

7. **Special Items of Revenue and Appropriations in the 2024 Budget Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-137

**SPECIAL ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATION
IN THE 2024 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

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington received the sum of \$2,500.00 from a donation as listed below and wishes to amend its 2024 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 2024 in the sum of \$2,500.00, which items are now available as a revenue from the following sources pursuant to the provision of statute:

Private Donation for Special Camera for Police Department	\$2,500.00
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a like sum of \$2,500.00 be and the same is hereby appropriated under the caption of the following:

Private Donation for Police Special Camera	\$2,500.00
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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. Huelsebusch	- Aye
Mr. Panico	- Aye
Mayor Mueller	- Aye

8. **Resolution to Authorize Use of State Contract for Chip Seal Treatment (Oil and Stone) Not to Exceed \$300,000**

The following resolution was offered for consideration:

#R-2024-138

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING NEW JERSEY STATE COOPERATIVE PURCHASES**

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington wishes to purchase Oil and Stone Treatment from an authorized vendor under the New Jersey State Master Contract #19-GNSV2-00861, T0869; and

WHEREAS, the purchase of goods and services by local contracting units is authorized by the Local Public Contracts Law, *N.J.S.A.* 40A:11-12; and

WHEREAS, Morris Asphalt Company, Inc., P.O. Box 305, Lafayette, New Jersey, 07848 has been awarded New Jersey State Master Contract for Oil and Stone Treatment; and

WHEREAS, the purchasing agent recommends the utilization of this contract on the grounds that it represents the best price available, not to exceed \$300,000.00; and

WHEREAS, Richard J. Sheola as Chief Finance Officer has certified the availability of funds for this contract in account 4-01-304-201 and shall make the appropriate entry into the Township's accounting system pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 5:30-5.1 and 5.2 and said certification shall be attached to the Resolution.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, that Morris Asphalt Company, Inc. be awarded a contract for Oil and Stone Treatment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Mayor and Township Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the contract documents necessary to effectuate the award of this contract. The Township Attorney shall review any and all contractual documents prepared in furtherance of this award; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

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

9. ***Application for a Special Event Permit / La Finca Costa Rican Traditional Festival and Bull Riding Event***

A ***MOTION*** was made by Mr. Panico to approve the special event permit, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

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

10. ***Application for Special Event Permit / Schaefer Farms/ Irish Fun Day***

A ***MOTION*** was made by Mr. Panico to approve the special event permit, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

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

11. ***Application for Special Event Permit / Schaefer Farms / Fall Pumpkin Picking***

A ***MOTION*** was made by Mr. Panico to approve the special event permit, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch and on Roll Call vote the following was recorded:

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

12. ***Proposed Capital Projects for 2024*** - discussion

The Committee discussed the list of proposed capital projects for 2024. The Committee prioritized the list based on availability of funds highlighting the following items :

- Utility Vehicle for Whitehouse Rescue
- HVAC for Municipal Building
- Protective Body Armour Vests for Police

Administrator Sheola will prepare an ordinance for introduction at the next meeting.

13. **** Approval to Submit A Grant Application and Execute a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the Pulaski Road - Section 5 Improvements Project***

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

14. **** Release of Board of Health Escrow / Block 66, Lot 19.23 (Spy Lane)***

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

15. **** Application for Blue Light Permit (Ryan Levison)***

This matter was addressed under the Consent Agenda.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Sheola stated that he had nothing further to report.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Flynn stated that he had nothing further to report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

JOHN ALBANESE

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

JONATHAN HELLER

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

JUERGEN HUELSEBUSCH

Mr. Huelsebusch reported that the traffic safety committee will be looking at the intersection of Route 523 and 629 to address issues.

ADAM MUELLER

Mayor Mueller commended the Department of Public Works, Police and Emergency Services for their work during the recent storms dealing with power outages and cleanup.

VINCENT PANICO

Mr. Panico stated that they are meeting with JCP&L to ensure that they have an action plan in place regarding power outages. Mr. Panico further reported that recreation is currently working on a master plan update for Cornhusker's Park. Mr. Panico continued that Museums will host a speaker on August 2nd on the history of raw milk and National Night Out will be on August 6th.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Emanuel Bola commented on the recent accidents on Route 523 and expressed concern about safety.

Betty Ann Fort spoke to the increased speeding throughout the Township.

COMMENTS FROM THE GOVERNING BODY

Mr. Heller spoke to the need for roof replacement at Cold Brook School and repairs at Dart's Mill.

Mr. Huelsebusch commented on collaborating with Raritan Township regarding work on River Road.

As there was no further business, *A MOTION* was made by Mr. Panico at 9:10 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Huelsebusch with a vote of ayes all, nays none recorded.

Submitted by:

Karin M Parker, *RMC*
Municipal Clerk