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M I N U T E S  
Meeting of the Mayor and Council  
Monday, October 18, 2010  
8:00 P.M.

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER -

Mayor Watkins called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Borough Hall.

SILENT PRAYER - FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Watkins called for a moment of silent prayer and asked Councilwoman Walker to lead the salute to the flag.

STATEMENT -

Mayor Watkins read the statement under the Sunshine Law and asked the Clerk to put it into the minutes. "Adequate Notice of this meeting has been made by sending notice on December 18, 2009 to THE RECORD and THE RIDGEWOOD NEWSPAPER, by positioning on the bulletin board in the lobby of the Borough Hall, and filing a Notice of the same with the Municipal Clerk".

ROLL CALL - Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon, Councilman Cordts and Mayor Watkins were present, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - By Consent

Motion by Councilwoman Walker, seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the minutes of the Mayor and Council work session and regular meeting of October 4, 2010.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

PROCLAMATION & AWARDS - NONE

APPOINTMENTS & PERSONNEL CHANGES

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Cordts to approve the separation of Daniel Biggar, Senior Bus/Van Driver, effective immediately.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Cordts to approve the resignation of Bruce Brandsema from River Edge Volunteer Fire Company #1, effective October 12, 2010.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

CORRESPONDENCE -

Notice	-	River Edge Board of Education - 10/4/10 Re: Meeting 10/6/10
E-mail	-	Cops Hiring Recovery Program 2010 - 10/1/10 Re: Notification-Didn't Receive Grant
Notice	-	Bergen County Environmental Council-10/4/10 Re: Geese Population Reduction Program
Letter	-	Cablevision - 10/13/10 Re: Notice of Programming Change
Letter	-	Fire Company #1 - 10/14/10 Re: Resignation-Bruce Brandsema

MONTHLY REPORTS -

Building Department	-	September 2010
Fire Prevention	-	July through September 2010

ORDINANCES - 1<sup>st</sup> Reading -

Denise Dondiego, Borough Clerk read the title of Ordinance #1716 as

follows:

Ordinance #1716 - AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$20,000.00 FROM THE GENERAL CAPITAL FUND BALANCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENTS OF THE SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Walker to approve the first reading of Ordinance #1716 as follows:

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE  
ORDINANCE #1716

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$20,000.00 FROM THE GENERAL CAPITAL FUND BALANCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENTS OF THE SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM AND IMPROVEMENTS

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen and State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION I. The improvements desired in Section 2 of this ordinance are hereby authorized as improvements to be made by the Borough of River Edge, New Jersey for the purpose of the making of said improvements, there are hereby appropriated the sum of \$20,000.00 of which \$20,000.00 is from the General Capital Fund Balance.

SECTION II. The improvements are authorized as follows:

- a. The making of improvements to Borough grounds, for: Construction, reconstruction and improvements of the sanitary sewer system improvements at various locations within the Borough including but not limited to Valley Road. The list of streets including but not limited to Valley Road shall be placed on file in the office of the Borough Clerk and made available for public inspection during normal business hours. It is hereby determined and stated that the Borough Council may, by resolution, amend such list from time to time within the appropriation made hereby.
- b. Other Expenses, including but not limited to architect's fees, accounting, engineering and inspection costs, legal expense and other expenses to the extent permitted by Section 20 of the Local Bond Law.

SECTION III: The appropriation shall be made from the General Capital Fund and no debt is authorized.

SECTION IV: This ordinance shall take effect immediately after the first publication after final passage as provided by law.

Mayor Margaret Falahee Watkins

ATTEST:

Denise A. Dondiego, Borough Clerk

Dated:

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

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ORDINANCES - 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading - NONE

RESOLUTIONS - By Consent

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Cannon to approve resolution #10-378 and #10-379, #10-381 through #10-386 and #10-388.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

#10-378 Amend 2010 Budget

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40:A4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services approved the insertion or increase of any special item of revenue in the budget of any County or Municipality when such an item shall have been made available by law and the amount thereof was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

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

WHEREAS, the Borough has received a deposit in its Unappropriated Reserve for State and Local Housing Grant in the amount of \$3,209.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of River Edge that it does hereby request the approval of the Director for the following:

Increase an item of revenue entitled:

3. Miscellaneous Revenue - Section F

State/Local Cooperative Housing Grant.....\$3,209.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$3,209.00 and the same is hereby appropriated under the caption of:

General Appropriations

(A) Operations excluded from the "CAPS"

Public & Private Programs Offset by Revenues

State/Local Cooperative Housing Grant.....\$3,209.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough forward two (2) copies of this resolution to the Director of Local Government Services.

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Councilman Smith-asked Alan if we've received the funds for this grant already. Alan Negreann-replied, yes we have received the balance of the funds. We received a grant of \$4,400.00 and used everything except the \$1,000.60.

#10-379 Resolution Authorizing Chief Financial Office to Cancel Grant Fund Receivable and Appropriated Reserve for the Over the Limit Under Arrest Grant

WHEREAS, the Borough of River Edge received approval for a grant through the State of New Jersey Division of Highway Safety for a grant entitled "Over the Limit Under Arrest" for August 20th through September 6, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of River Edge has on its books and records an account receivable of \$1,000.60 and an appropriated reserve of \$1,000.60; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has investigated the account receivable and appropriated reserve balance and has recommended that they be cancelled.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to cancel the grant fund account receivable and appropriated reserve for the grant entitled "Over the Limit Under Arrest" both in the amount of \$1,000.60.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chief Financial Officer is hereby instructed to adjust the records accordingly.

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Bill Lindsley, Esq.-suggested that resolution #10-380 be amended to remove the second item that was listed for Paul Imbarrato.

Motion by Councilman Cannon, seconded by Councilman Cordts to approve resolution #10-380 as amended.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

#10-380 Resolution to Go Into Closed Session and Exclude Public

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A.10:4-12, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain enumerated circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. That the public shall be excluded from the October 18, 2010 meeting and discussion of the hereinafter specified subject matter:

<u>Closed Session</u> <u>Docket #</u>	<u>Item Title or Description</u>	<u>Statutory</u> <u>Reference</u>
10-10/18-1	Personnel - PBA/SOA Negotiations	N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(8)

2. It is anticipated at this time that the above stated subject matter will be made public within a reasonable time, the substance of which will be released after the Mayor and Council or the specific authorized public body has reviewed and specifically accepted the data.

3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

October 18, 2010

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#10-381 Resolution Permitting the Possession and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages at a Block Party on Bogert Road

WHEREAS, on or about October 8, 2010, the Borough of River Edge granted permission to Peter Loquet, 847 Bogert Road, River Edge, New Jersey, to hold a block party on Bogert Road on October 30, 2010 in accordance with Borough Ordinance #1678; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Loquet has requested that the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages be permitted in connection with said block party; and

WHEREAS, Borough Code Section 114-15 allows the Governing Body to permit the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages in or on a public street or sidewalk in connection with an authorized block party.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge that persons age 21 and over be and hereby are permitted to possess and consume alcoholic beverages at the block party described above, on the date and time specified herein.

October 18, 2010

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#10-382 Amend Agreement with Colin Quinn, Esq., 745 Kinderkamack Road, River Edge, New Jersey 07661 for Legal Services as Redevelopment Attorney

WHEREAS, there exists a need for Legal Services for the purpose of redevelopment of the Southern End of River Edge; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of River Edge has previously awarded a contract to Colin Quinn, Esq. via resolution #10-10 dated January 4, 2010 in the amount of \$4,500.00 and amended via resolution #10-171 dated April 19, 2010 in the amount of \$15,000.00; and

WHEREAS, additional funding is required for Legal Services for redevelopment representation; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has determined and certified in writing that the annual aggregate value of the service may exceed \$17,500; and

WHEREAS, Colin Quinn, Esq. has completed and submitted a Business Entity Disclosure Certification which certifies that Colin Quinn, Esq. has not made any reportable contributions to a political or candidate committee in the Borough of River Edge Governing Body in the previous one year, and that the contract will prohibit Colin Quinn, Esq. from making any reportable contributions through the term of the contract; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have reviewed this matter at a work session on October 18, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available from Account #01-2010-20-1552-180 of the Current Fund in an amount not to exceed \$16,000.00; and

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.) requires that the resolution authorizing the award of contracts for "Professional Services" without competitive bids and the contract itself must be available for public inspection; and

WHEREAS, the rate of pay shall not exceed \$85.00 per hour:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge as follows:

1. The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute the attached agreement with Colin Quinn, Esq., 745 Kinderkamack Road, New Jersey, 07601.
2. The Business Disclosure Entity Certification and the Determination of Value be placed on file with this resolution; and
3. The contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a "Professional Service" in accordance with 40A:11-5(1)(a) of the Local Public Contracts Law because the service performed is by a person authorized to practice a recognized profession.

October 18, 2010

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#10-383 Amend 2010 Budget

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40:A4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion or increase of any special item of revenue in the budget of any County or Municipality when such an item shall have been made available by law and the amount thereof was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

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

WHEREAS, the Borough has received a deposit in its Unappropriated Reserve for Body Armor Grant Fund in the amount of \$2,155.79; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of River Edge that it does hereby request the approval of the Director for the following:

Increase an item of revenue entitled:

3. Miscellaneous Revenue - Section F

Unappropriated Reserve for Body Armor Grant.....\$2,155.79

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$2,155.79 and the same is hereby appropriated under the caption of:

General Appropriations

(B) Operations excluded from the "CAPS"

Public & Private Programs Offset by Revenues

Body Armor Grant Fund.....\$2,155.79

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough forward two (2) copies of this resolution to the Director of Local Government Services.

October 18, 2010

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#10-384 Authorize Refund of Escrow Deposit to Michael Lev, 117 Tenney Avenue, Block 612, Lot 4

WHEREAS, an agreement was entered into between the Borough and Michael Lev, 117 Tenney Avenue, Block 612, Lot 4 for an ingress and egress over Borough property for the purpose of allowing movement of equipment necessary for the removal of a tree; and

WHEREAS, a required \$1,000.00 escrow deposit was received from the homeowner, Michael Lev; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Public Works examined the Borough Property and has determined that everything is in order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Accounts Supervisor refund \$1,000.00 to Michael Lev, 117 Tenney Avenue, River Edge, New Jersey 07661.

October 18, 2010

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Councilman Smith-asked if this value reduction is for the property along the river?  
Bill Lindsley-replied, yes it's the one on the river.

#10-385 Authorize Refund of 2008 Taxes Due to N.J. Tax Court Judgment

WHEREAS, a Tax Court Judgment was entered on 8/27/2010 and the same was received by the tax office reducing the Assessed Value on Block 1006, Lot 2, property known as 286A Kinderkamack Road, Owner, 286 Kinderkamack Rd. Corp.

WHEREAS, the 2008 taxes are paid in full.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Accounts Supervisor to refund the property owner \$4,805.70 and the Tax Collector to adjust her records accordingly.

Tax Year	Old Value	New Value	Refund
2008	447,500	240,000	\$4,805.70
Total Refund Amount:			\$4,805.70

Make check payable to:

286 Kinderkamack Rd. Corp.  
286A Kinderkamack Road  
River Edge, NJ 07661

October 18, 2010

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#10-386 Resolution Approving the Definition of Severance from Employment for the Volunteer Members of the River Edge Volunteer Fire Department Under the Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP)

WHEREAS, the Borough of River Edge adopted Ordinance #1289 on May 7, 2000 which created the Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP); and

WHEREAS, the Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service has issued rules for Compensation Deferred under Eligible Deferred Compensation Plans (26CFR Parts 1 and 602) effective July 11, 2003; and

WHEREAS, these regulations indicate that a distribution from the LOSAP plan may be made for reasons including but not limited to "severance from employment"; and

WHEREAS, volunteer members of the River Edge Volunteer Fire Department may in certain instances be considered to be employed by the Borough of River Edge; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Administrator has asked for a clarification as to the Life Member status of a member of the River Edge Volunteer Fire Department and whether it constitutes a "severance from employment" or service from the River Edge Volunteer Fire Department and thus meets the withdrawal of eligibility Internal Revenue Service requirement of "severance from employment"; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have reviewed this matter at a work session on October 18, 2010.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Borough of River Edge that the membership status of a Life Member in the River Edge Volunteer Fire Department by-laws meets the Withdrawal of Eligibility Internal Revenue Service requirement of "severance from employment".

October 18, 2010

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Councilman Smith read resolution #10-387 into the record.

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Cannon to approve resolution #10-387.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

#10-387 Payment of Bills

WHEREAS, vouchers for the payment of goods and services rendered to the Borough of River Edge have been received; and

WHEREAS, each bill has been checked by the receiving department, approved by the Chief Financial Officer and Borough Clerk and reviewed by the three members of the Finance Committee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that bills as listed now be confirmed for payment from the appropriate funds as follows:

CURRENT ACCOUNT TOTAL	\$138,721.63
CAPITAL ACCOUNT	\$129,585.20
RECREATION ACCOUNT	\$ 755.00
TRUST OTHER - DEVELOPERS ACCOUNT	\$ 1,107.50
TRUST ASSESSMENT ACCOUNT	\$ 8,169.50
ANIMAL WELFARE ACCOUNT	\$ 3.60
TRUST OTHER ACCOUNT	\$ 68,407.50
OPEN SPACE ACCOUNT	\$ 1,126.27

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that claims read and approved by the Governing Body at a Council meeting will be dated the day after the reading of those claims and will appear on the following bill list at the next public meeting of the Mayor and Council at which time claims would be paid.

October 18, 2010

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#10-388 Confirm Endorsement of Community Development Project

WHEREAS, a Bergen County Community Development Grant of \$40,000.00 has been proposed by the Borough of River Edge for the New Concepts for Living in the municipality of River Edge; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the State Interlocal Services Act, Community Development funds may not be spent in a municipality without authorization by the Governing Body; and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid project is in the best interest of the people of River Edge; and

WHEREAS, this resolution does not obligate the financial resources of the municipality and is intended solely to expedite expenditure of the aforesaid Community Development Funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governing Body of River Edge hereby confirm endorsement for the aforesaid project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Director of the Bergen County Community Development Program so that implementation of the aforesaid project may be expedited.

October 18, 2010

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OPEN HEARING OF THE PUBLIC -

Motion by Councilman Cannon, seconded by Councilman Smith to open hearing of the public.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

Alphonse Bartelloni-268 Webb Avenue-asked if he could address the Council on a few issues since he and Ed Mignone are running as the Republican candidates. He feels that the Borough should not have purchased the Bogert Road property. He further stated that right now the Borough is struggling to meet its existing obligations and he feels that it is unjustifiable to spend anymore money on something that is non-essential. He understands that the property was purchased by grant money and it is his hope that all of the acquisition and clean up costs are covered by those funds including possible remediation fees for an oil tank. He pointed out that the park does not serve all of the people of River Edge. It does not help the Police, the DPW, the Librarians or any of our municipal workers who were furloughed and forced to accept a fifteen day pay cut. He feels that it also doesn't help our citizens who saw their municipal taxes increase dramatically last year, it also doesn't help our seniors who can't afford to stay in town and it doesn't attract young families to move to River Edge. He understands that Shade Tree, Beautification, Recreation, Green Team and Councilwoman Walker have put a lot of time into this park, but feels that we cannot keep bonding and spending because the grant money will only cover so much and the rest of the funds will have to come from the town. He stated that the time for taxing, spending and bonding is over and they would like to see that property transferred to a conservation trust, much like the Steuben House at New Bridge Landing. The town would no longer own or be responsible for the property and Green Acres money is available for conservation trust. They suggest that the pocket park be transferred there so that volunteerism, donations and not tax dollars be used to fund that park and not the citizens of River Edge.

Kathleen Murphy-741 Williams Avenue-feels that the pocket park issue is getting out of control and suggests that other issues be dealt with such as shared services.

Edward Mignone-244 Concord Drive-stated that they've spent a little over an hour talking about the park and fictitious housing units and have glanced over the fact that the New Jersey Transit plan includes over 300 apartment units and Paul Imbaratto's plan includes over 70 apartments. He is surprised that no one seems concerned about the impact that may have on our schools, services, Police or DPW. He continued by saying that we've paid \$188,000.00 to Nelessen to come up with pretty plans which are all residentially dominated. He stated that one of the New Jersey Transit expression of interest plans makes reference to convenient retail not destination retail and states that due to the parking issue, the site may not support destination retail. This means that the majority of the plan will be residential which could mean up to 500 or more units.

Paris Myers-844 Summit Avenue-spoke on behalf of the Board of Education and expressed concerns about the potential negative impact that a possible residential development would have on our schools. She further stated that the additional congestion would cause traffic and safety concerns and also increase the number of students attending the schools. She asked that the Mayor and Council give careful thought and discussion including input from members of the community before proceeding.

Michelle Cariddi-193 Wayne Avenue-is a proud member of the Beautification Committee and was one of the people who started to clean up the pocket park area over the weekend. She stated that she has been a life long resident of River Edge and feels that a park would benefit the town and asked why every inch of the town need to be developed.

Joseph Dunsay-151 Concord Drive-asked Councilman Cannon why he thinks it is ludicrous to have a development on the Bogert Road site.

Mayor Watkins-explained that Councilman Cannon will answer that question during his council comments.

Joseph Dunsay-also asked Councilwoman Walker to explain her reasons also.

Carolyn Smyth-expressed her disappointment with the way the Zoning Board, Building Department and Borough Engineer have handled a pool installation at her neighbors home. She explained several of her concerns and offered supporting correspondence that was previously sent by her attorney. She stated that it is very clear in the Zoning Board resolution that drainage had to be installed before they could use the pool. Mrs. Smyth informed the Council that for three months the neighbors have enjoyed and used the pool with no drainage installation and feels that it is not her job to have to enforce Borough codes. She doesn't feel that she should have to retain an attorney because someone is not doing their job. She feels that she was diligent in following protocol and did not receive any response. She asked the Council to address this issue in their comments.

Mayor Watkins-thanked Mrs. Smyth for her comments and asked the Borough Attorney to respond.

Bill Lindsley-stated that he immediately called Bob Costa after speaking with Mrs. Smyth on Wednesday, and explained her additional concerns. Bob Costa advised him

that the drainage was done in accordance with the original conditions of the Zoning Board and he asked him to confirm that in writing. Bill Lindsley continue by saying that he saw Mr. Barrett on Saturday and informed him as to what Bob Costa told him. Carolyn Smyth-stated that there were two other issues that they were concerned about.

Bill Lindsley-again explained to Mrs. Smyth that Bob Costa told him that the drainage was done in accordance with the conditions of the Zoning Board. He suggested that Mr. Barrett speak with Bob Costa and possible have everyone go out there and take a look again.

Carolyn Smyth-feels that someone else should be involved because she still feels that she shouldn't have had to get an attorney when this should have been done in the first place.

Bill Lindsley-stated that he outlined those conditions in a letter he sent to Mr. Ziegler.

Carolyn Smyth-stated that the original letters starting June 21<sup>st</sup> address the issue and yet nothing was done until this past week. She feels that things should have been addressed in June.

Mayor Watkins-thanked Mrs. Smyth for bringing it up now and asked if she would leave the copies of the letters with the Borough Clerk for distribution to the Mayor and Council.

Kathleen Murphy-741 Williams Avenue-asked if Colin Quinn's statement that it would take approximately three years to remediate the chemicals on the Huffman Koos property was an accurate statement.

Mayor Watkins-stated that she has spoken with the owners of the property and they told her within the year. The Mayor also stated that she doesn't know for sure but they'll have to find out what the company says.

Kathleen Murphy-stated that it's very dangerous.

Mayor Watkins-explained that they've already done some type of remediation but they still need to do more. They need to use a chemical to dissolve the problem.

Casey Connors-asked if that includes both dry cleaners, the one that was in the Levitz building?

Mayor Watkins-replied, just the one that was in the property at Huffman Koos. She explained that it takes a while to get it done.

Casey Connors-asked if the Ciancia's are paying for the clean-up.

Mayor Watkins-replied yes, they've already \$500,000.00 to try and get this cleaned up.

Casey Connors-feels that they should go after the owner of the dry cleaners.

Kathy Donovan-12 Gainsborough-asked where the pocket park will be.

Mayor Watkins-explained that the park will be located on Bogert Road between the church and Cherry Hill School.

Bill Donovan-12 Gainsborough-feels that having a park there would be a great idea and would give people a chance to sit and have quiet time.

#### CLOSE HEARING OF THE PUBLIC -

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Walker to close hearing of the public.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

#### COUNCIL COMMENTS -

Councilwoman Walker-thanked everyone for coming to the meeting this evening. She stated that it was very disturbing to her when she saw the plans for housing units on the property that they've spent quite a few years in acquiring grants for. Councilwoman Walker stated that "there is no park on that side of town and to have a small space that is not developed next to the school is a big deal". Councilwoman Walker clarified that the Beautification Committee was given permission by the DPW to go on to that property to start to clean-up over the weekend.

Mayor Watkins-stated that the DPW does not have the authority to give permission, the Council does.

Councilwoman Walker-stated that the DPW had been given direction not to touch that property and the front of it has looked a mess for quite a while. The Beautification Committee had offered to clean it up and pick up the mess and Councilwoman Walker feels that the Mayor has made this into a political issue. She knows that the Mayor has not been in favor of this from the beginning but stated that the Borough funds all of their parks in the same way. She stated that Environmental Resolutions has refurbished and drawn plans for our parks starting with our ball fields and ending with the tennis courts. She continued by saying that the Beautification Committee volunteers work on all Borough grounds equally. She stated that this is a park that is being funded for both the purchase and demolition. She explained although the economy is not good, it's important to keep up our infrastructure up and feels that bonding allows them to do that. She stated that bonding is "the only way that we can fiscally responsibly keep our town running and even out the payments so the life of the purchase is paid for by everyone and not just in one year". She continued by

saying that if they don't bond next year they may not be able to put a roof on the Library or pave the streets and feels that home values are tied to many of these things. Councilwoman Walker stated "so to make bonding a boogie man is wrong, it's just part of how municipalities take care of their town. We don't have a large number of businesses that are bringing in the revenue that's going to help offset those things. We're basically paying for it ourselves so that's why we bond". As far as redevelopment in the south end of town, Councilwoman Walker stated that the plans have always been condos and the thought process was that a condo has a longer term ownership and will not be looked at the same way that the apartments are. She stated that when you look at the number of people that come from the apartments with children, the number is very high. She continued by saying that "this Council and many people before me have worked very hard on putting together a plan for redevelopment that was going to put the residential component in there, but also do it mindfully and hopefully reduce the impact to our school system". She stated that this plan has been going on for several years and has had input from the community and she feels that this year they've had the most significant movement than they've had in past years. She is disappointed that the pocket park has become such a big political issue because three years ago when she came on to the Council, she saw it as a green space that could benefit the community. She continued by saying that they've worked very carefully on the plans for the pocket park to make sure that the impact to the Police, DPW and the community will be minimal. Councilwoman Walker wished that instead of throwing stones at it, it would be nice to embrace it and pick on something besides things that are already done. She feels that the Republican candidates that are running for office should focus on things that they want to do instead of criticizing this Council for what was already done. She stated that "after November 2<sup>nd</sup>, we're all neighbors again and the nastiness takes a little while to go away".

Councilman Smith explained that when they purchased the park there was no match by the Borough because one of the grants was a match for the other. He stated that "I've heard it called furlough park and not a single dollar of operating money was used at all for that park that would have any impact on the furloughs". He explained that the Borough has received over \$2,000,000.00 in grants for parks, ball fields, pavilions and pathways over the last ten years and over \$3,000,000.00 for road projects from both the County and from the federal government. He continued to explain that that's \$5,000,000.00 that the taxpayers did not have to put out because they were not matching funds. He continued by saying that we did have to put money into the \$2,300,000.00 from the County because it was a large project involving infrastructure improvements. He explained that "the American Legion building, we've just submitted a grant for \$270,000.00 but there's no guarantee we're going to get that grant, there's no guarantee we won't. We have a very high success rate of getting Community Development Grants because they are primarily for seniors and for people with disabilities and we've been getting many of them over the years". He stated that there is about a 10% match for a Community Development Grant so for the actual application of \$298,000.00 our match would be \$27,000.00. He understands that many people are upset when they receive their tax bill but explained that what most people don't understand is the municipal portion is only 25% of the total bill. Councilman Smith addressed the issue of apartments versus condos and explained how they researched other transit villages throughout the state and how they were being done. He continued by saying that former Councilman Felice researched quite a few of the studies related transit villages and the number of children that come out of condos was extremely low. He stated that this research was done a few years ago so this number may or may not have changed and the Council made decisions based on the material that they had on hand. He stated that "I would hope that this will be the last time we talk about this in this format". Councilman Smith asked Colin Quinn what the tax revenue would be from the three plans that have been approved in the south end of town. He was told that it would be approximately \$1,300,000.00 for the New Jersey Transit plan, \$750,000 for Imbarrato's plan and \$1,000,000 for the Bertin plan. Those amounts are based on building it to the plan that was approved. He read the article from the League of Municipalities magazine in which the River Edge Green Team was mentioned for receiving Sustainable New Jersey certification. He congratulated the Green Team and the driving force behind them, Esther Fletcher for all their hard work in achieving this certification.

Councilman Cannon stated that his comments on the Bogert Road Pocket Park were directed towards the suggested resolution which would say that no development would take place there. He feels that it would be ludicrous because the property has been funded by open space and green acres money and those would preclude us from doing that. Councilman Cannon state that "I'm disappointed and actually very tired of the back and forth debate about the park and I guess what's been frustrating is just the misinformation". He continued by saying that there were passionate comments made about Police and DPW furloughs this evening. Councilman Cannon explained that "those do not have anything to do with the park. Not one penny of our operating budget was spent on the park, not one penny of the Library's budget was reduced in relationship to the park or the American Legion and to relate those, which has been done, it's been done up here by members of the Council up here and that type of information is a fear tactic that people are trying to spread and I think it's misleading and it's disingenuous". He further stated that the money that they are receiving for the park cannot be used for anything else other than open space development. He stated that "this Council

hasn't voted on spending any money other than the grant money that we're receiving and when we sit in budget season in January, we will decide what open space money we can spend for the development of the park". He explained that the Council also knows that they have other Recreation commitments for the other parks in town that need to be maintained. He stated that the Mayor and Council along with the citizens budget committee spent many hours making sure that every dollar was spent as wisely and prudently as possible. He explained that the average tax bill went up \$74.00 for the municipal portion and the rest is from the schools. He also explained that they brought that number down from over \$1,000.00 per household on the municipal side of the budget and he assured everyone that they will continue to spend wisely and really deliberate before spending any money.

Paul Cordts-agrees that the nastiness does stay around after the election but feels that there have been many accusations from the Democratic party also including e-mail that had gone out. He stated that he is stepping up for what he believes in and even though the park is a done deal, he feels that the Borough will still have to come up with matching funds somewhere along the line. He really appreciates that people are doing things for the town to make it better but doesn't feel that any costs should be incurred at this point in time.

Mayor Watkins-thanked everyone for coming up this evening. The Mayor stated that she appreciates the good will of the volunteers in trying to beautify the area but for their own safety she asked that they stay out until they see what needs to be remediated there. The Mayor agreed with Councilman Cannon that none of the funds that came in caused furloughs to the Police, DPW or anyone in the Borough this year but did state that the cost of boarding up the houses and fencing around the property did come out of the Public Works budget. The Mayor commented on the political rhetoric that's been going on and stated "I did not like the idea that I was portrayed as someone who fabricates, Stacy, I do not fabricate. Everything I get is provided to everybody on this Council, everything that goes on here passes to every single person on this Council. I get a letter from anybody, every Council person gets a copy of it, I post everything in the Library every single week. You can go there and get the minutes. So to accuse me of fabricating I think you're totally off the mark and you do owe me an apology as well as the to Republican Council people as you mention them. Now, where you got your information, if it was from Wendy, well then she is at fault and I am not taking it out on you but you have to check your sources". The Mayor thanked everyone for coming up to the meeting, especially the two members of the Police Department. She thanked the Policemen who went down to the park to inform the volunteers that they shouldn't be there. The Mayor was very concerned after receiving two phone calls from residents wondering what was going on in the park area. The Mayor stated that thinking out of the box can be a good thing and wished that more people would be receptive to that. The Mayor also stated that it's unfortunate that this political campaign has gotten nasty and wished everyone a good weekend.

ADJOURNMENT, - 9:00 P.M.

Motion by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Walker to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Councilwoman Walker, Councilman Smith, Councilman Cannon and Councilman Cordts voted yes, Councilwoman Rush and Councilman Porco were absent.

Mayor Margaret Falahee Watkins

Attest:

Denise A. Dondiego, Borough Clerk

Dated: