

**BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2019**

PRESENT:

Councilwoman	Ellen Busted
Councilman	Dario Chinigo
Councilman	Joseph Gautier
Councilwoman	Michelle Kaufman
Councilman	Thomas Papaleo

ALSO PRESENT:

Borough Attorney	Tom Sarlo
Borough Administrator	Ray Poerio
Borough Clerk	Stephanie Evans

ABSENT:

Councilwoman	Mary Davis
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Council President Busted called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

BOROUGH AMINISTRATOR'S TOPICS –

1. **School Polling Districts** - Mr. Poerio stated by saying there were several requests asking us questions regarding why it is necessary we use the schools for elections. He thinks the Mayor-Elect sent back a very eloquent email back to all the parties involved. It listed 3 or 4 different bullet points associated with that. If you are getting any question associated with that, or any further questions that you guys may have he is happy to answer.

Councilwoman Busted asked whether or not the schools have any concerns or issues do they report them back to the County Board of Elections for remediation, let's say if they feel that there are two entrances and one should be closed, any feedback go from the schools to authority of the elections. The Clerk that it would have to go through the Clerk's Office. Councilwoman Busted asked the Clerk if she had gotten anything, and the reply was no.

Councilman Papaleo wanted to state for the record that if there was another viable location, the Borough would certainly work with County Board of Elections to make that change, but as of right now we do not have a viable locations for change. But maybe with the community center we might be able to alleviate maybe one of the schools. We'll see once the community center is built.

2. **New Jersey Domestic Violence Party** – Mr. Poerio explained that in consulting with the Borough Attorney, he is asking that any action on this be tabled as of today. Right now on a list of the policy they have not incorporated the training associated with it. He thinks once the State comes out with a new training policy, it is something that either the Council as a whole or the Personnel Committee can certainly come back and revisit.
3. **Historical Commission** – Mr. Poerio sent an email to all the Council regarding the commission. He was posed some interesting questions over the week regarding the Historic Commission and in no particular order he addressed them. Question #1 become is a minor

allowed to be a member of the commission. Frankly when we got to that point it made he stop and reflect a little bit as far as if you are going to look to set precedence, or perhaps there has already been precedence that has been set, but if it's okay for the Historic Commission is it okay for Recreation, the Planning Board, Traffic and Safety, and so on and so forth. He thinks this something that Council needs to be aware of. Pointe #2 associated with that is, his personal opinion is that he fully believes in student involvement and it's a good thing to have students represented on various Boards and Committees. But perhaps you may want to consider not as a voting member. He knows from his early days as a Dept. Head for Recreation he had 2 students, one male, one female that were representatives from the high school that would come to our meetings attending and participating by adding their 2 cents, but when it came down votes they were not considered voting members. The 3rd question that was posed is as it deals with underage and also as well as other members, the potential of those individuals living out of town and what your (inaudible) are, say a resident from Oradell wants to be part of the Historical Commission in River Edge. Those are 3 difference topics that he kind of wanted to approach this conversation with you all and get some feedback and direction of how you want to move forward with this, depending upon the direction you give to him as a Council, may require us to modify ordinances and he turns it over to the Council.

Councilwoman Kaufman added that there was one teen who had already been on the Commission previously and the prior lawyer had said it was okay for him to vote. So as an Alternate you only vote when the 5 regulars don't have enough for a quorum. He had been given permission previously. There are 2 teens now that are interested in joining the Commission, one of them lives in River Edge and one doesn't. They will both be able to help us with Facebook and Instagram because no one else from that Commission is really doing that because of the job. You could say they bring something to the table. Even the person from Oradell, he knows that we will only be doing River Edge history not Oradell. Councilwoman Busted said there is also a River Dell student who is appointed to the Environmental Commission as well because precedent had been set with the Historic Commission. She doesn't know if it's part of their local governing ordinance, who would determine that. Mr. Sarlo replied we would have to do it by ordinance if you wanted it set it at 18, if you wanted them to live, (inaudible) if you want somebody from out of town voting on Historic designations in town that is entirely up to you but there is no statute or regulation or ordinance that says you can be under...he thinks it's great they want to get involved but should they be voting members. Councilman Chinigo asked if there was a Historic Commission in Oradell. Councilwoman Busted replied that she didn't know if it was a Commission or a Committee. (simultaneous talking) Mr. Sarlo said as Ray said it goes to all other organizations and committees. Councilwoman Busted added that Tom was very helpful with the Municipal Alliance when we needed to set voting members and non-voting members for the quorum. We have language in an ordinance today which establishes voting vs. non-voting members if we wanted to do that for the Municipal Alliance, so we can follow that model. Councilman Chinigo personally thought they should be allowed to be on it but as non-voting members. Only residents should be voting members on any Committee or Commission in town. Councilwoman Kaufman asked what about the teenager that is from River Edge, one is and one isn't. Councilman Chinigo replied as far as voting rights are concerned he thinks you should be a resident in order to vote. As far as the teenagers he thinks perhaps an age cut-off should be considered because 14 is a teenager and 17 is a teenager. So perhaps 16 as the cut-off to be voting. Personally he thinks it should be,

honestly, over 18 especially because of situations like the Land Use Board and some of the Commissions that take on bigger subject matters than others. Councilwoman Kaufman said they are trying to get younger teens just so that they have them for a few years because the time they are seniors they are checking out of everything kind of mentally at that point and normally people have a 4 year term. They are trying to get like a sophomore who would be on for three. Councilwoman Busted asked if they could be a non-voting member. Councilman Papaleo said he thought that would be appropriate and he doesn't think Commissions and Boards should have adolescents voting. If the Committee wants to do something like that, he thinks again to be, not again but in his general thinking it needs to be organic which means we should be asking the Committee whether they wish for them to grant voting rights and then he would rather see an ordinance that says voting rights can be granted to a minor if the Committee so wishes it. He doesn't think we should granting rights to Boards and Commissions because they have authority that is binding and therefore it really has to be a legal adult in his opinion but that is just him. Councilwoman Kaufman said there is 5 regular members and 2 alternates, so if either of them can be voting alternates are they going to have to get 4 alternates. That's the question. Councilman Papaleo thought there can be another membership level. Councilwoman Busted mentioned another category of member as a non-voting member. Councilwoman Kaufman mentioned a non-voting student representative. Councilman Chinigo asked if they could add numbers to the Commission. Councilman Papaleo can they can be called liaisons if we wished. Councilwoman Kaufman said the Chair was saying for the amount of time the teen member puts in they would want to vote, in the Chair's opinion. Councilwoman Busted said she appreciates the Chair's opinion but what she thinks we are saying is we don't want minors to be appointed as voting members to any of our Commissions or Boards rather. Councilman Chinigo said it could substantially effect the rights of residents and we should have adults making those decisions, which Councilwomen Busted and Kaufman agreed with. He doesn't want to belittle their ability to think through things, however, for a variety of reasons in the law there is a cut-off at 18 as an adult and if you can't vote in the elections before you are 18 (inaudible). Councilwoman Kaufman said so they would still need 7 members and these 2 people would be extra. Mr. Sarlo asked if they are having a hard time filling the board with 7. Councilwoman Kaufman said there were slots that need to get filled right now. One of them had been a teen alternate who had been voting previously. Councilwoman Busted asked if we know whether or not the ordinance was modified when Mayor Mignone appointed that individual. The Clerk replied she believed not and also the alternate you may be speaking about was already 18 and has been 18. Councilwoman Busted asked if he was 18 when he was appointed. Councilwoman Kaufman didn't think he was 18 when he joined. Councilwoman Busted asked if we needed some type of motion to move forward on this. The ordinance doesn't speak to it. Mr. Poerio said what he is hearing he would summarize by saying is the Council would have no objection of having 2 individuals serving as members of the Commission as non-voting members. He can take a look and see, with the Borough Attorney, to review the current ordinance and see if they have the ability to just add them in or whether we need to amend our current ordinance. Either way it seems that seems to be the direction of where you guys want to head. Councilwoman Kaufman thought we needed to amend it because alternate have been allowed to vote. Councilman Chinigo said now if we allow non-residents to join the Historic that means we have to allow non-residents to join other Commissions and Boards. Both Councilwoman Busted and Councilman Papaleo were not comfortable with non-residents being part of any Commissions or Boards. A Committee if we want to do something like that he thinks we give the authority to the

Committee to consider whether they want to add a non-resident. He really isn't thrilled about that idea either. (simultaneous talking) Mr. Sarlo said that the Mayor and Council are appointing members to Committees and you have a lot more leeway as to who you want to appoint or not appoint. A Commission you don't have that ability, they are appointing it, you can set the perimeters of it by ordinance but they are appointed. By Committee though if somebody wants to... Councilman Gautier said you can always have a non-resident be a liaison like a River Dell Liaison. Councilwoman Busted added a volunteer, you can just volunteer for the Committee. Councilwoman Kaufmann said he is interested in history and he would be willing to help. Councilman Chinigo asked why is being on the Commission as a voting member a deal breaker. Councilwoman Kaufmann said she thinks the Council has already saying... Councilman Chinigo was asking if and he was trying to understand that it seems to him that was what she said, maybe he misunderstood. Councilwoman Kaufmann stated she didn't know if it is or isn't a deal breaker. Councilwoman Busted asked Mr. Poerio to look at this, and he replied he would take care of it. Councilwoman Kaufman asked if the Council was okay with the Oradell student participating. The Council didn't have any issue with him volunteering. Councilwoman Kaufman had one more thing, if the other teen or this teen is a non-voting, is the Council comfortable with them doing Instagram and Facebook posts for the Commission. Councilman Papaleo replied not independently but under the supervision of an adult. We do have a social media policy and that policy... Councilwoman Busted said is the person that gets approved is the kind of owner of that social media from the Commission. Councilwoman Kaufman said that no one has been doing it at all so... Mr. Poerio said that was something we can work through. Councilman Chinigo added that one of the voting members has to oversee it and take responsibility for whatever is posted. He thinks that's one of... Councilwoman Kaufman replied okay.

4. **Bike Share Program** – Mr. Poerio received a letter in today's mail regarding a bike share program from Teaneck. They wanted to know if the Borough would be interested in pursuing such an adventure. The Council knows what he knows and he just wanted to get the pulse from them if that is something they are interest in, he will say that we are and he will attend the meeting, or if you say we really are not interested in that as of today, he can let the Administrator know. Councilwoman Kaufman said that when people in the City do that they never wear helmets which is her problem. Councilwoman Busted confirmed that the information was just forwarded earlier tonight and she didn't have a chance to look at it so she thinks it should be tabled for another meeting. Councilman Papaleo also stated he didn't look at either, Councilman Chinigo asked if there was any more information, if not we will need a little bit more information. He wasn't sure how it would work out with Teaneck since we weren't exactly next door. Councilwoman Busted said that we were not the only municipality. Mr. Poerio said that was about 7 or 8 different municipalities that were asked to participate. It was kind of like a trial balloon of throwing it out there, if you are interested let me know and we will sit down... Councilman Chinigo asked if it was like the City bike program that has bikes everywhere. Councilman Papaleo said he would assume that there is some sort of monetary participation. Councilwoman Busted stated she didn't know enough about it to... is it a priority, do we want to have more information. Councilman Chinigo said he would like to hear more about it. He thinks biking is great, it helps the environment and there are a lot of ways it can be useful and he does have the same concerns as Councilwoman Kaufman about the helmets. He certainly would like to have information before saying yes or no. Councilwoman Busted wanted Mr. Poerio to ask them to provide more information in writing. She doesn't know if we would want him going to meetings at this point until we know. Mr. Poerio said he is happy to ask for it.

5. **Public Service Announcement** – The street sweeper is broken and it is expected to be repaired by the end of the week. While the guys go through and remove the leaves, typically the street sweeper follows behind picking up the leaves. So if you do see some of the leaves left over in the street we are aware of it, and know about it. As soon as the street sweeper is fixed we will back out there picking up the balance of leaves.

FOR DISCUSSION –

MAYOR’S REPORT – Councilwoman Busted just wanted to report that the Recreation Director, Carolyn Baldanza has gone out to the public to ask if anybody was interested in participating on the Cultural Affairs Committee. Which was created per the new ordinance when the new Recreation Commission ordinance was developed. She is now following through on that piece of it. She did post on Facebook looking for residents. Councilwoman Busted is mentioning it to the public if anyone is interested please reach out to Carolyn Baldanza in the Recreation Dept.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS –

Councilman Papaleo wanted to know where we are with Cablevision and Verizon connection. The Clerk stated that she sent out emails to two different companies for quotes on specific pieces of equipment. Nick from Oradell also recommended microphones that was not part of what she included on the requests. She is just waiting for these 2 companies to get back to her. Councilman Papaleo had a follow-up question, we were able to air it and he taped it being a Verizon customer, why can't we air right now. Is it that it's just or are we waiting until we have everything in place. Was that just a trial run? Can you speak on that? The Clerk stated that the only thing that she knows for sure is that according to Nick there is a cable line that is not currently working. That cable has to be purchased and reworked through the building which should set us up for airing on the cable companies. Councilman Papaleo added it was working and it failed or he didn't say. Mr. Poerio stated that Nick ran an add-hot wire, if that is what you want to call it. We have a list of about 15 different items to get it run correctly. You can plug it in, and again and run it through the back and plug it in, and probably get it up and running, but we do need someone to actually run the TV. He thinks it's more than just plugging it in so the system works, there needs to be further budget discussion as to who is going to do this. He can fire off a memo, are we looking for volunteers, and are we bring the individual that participated last time, so it's more than just a simple fix. Councilman Chinigo questioned if River Dell has a TV department, maybe we can reach out to them with some type of joint program, where students get credit for...Councilman Papaleo said it certainly is a Civics' lesson. Councilwoman Kaufman stated that they do. Councilwoman Busted said she would certainly like to see it, she know the Clerk has been assigned to doing this but we really need to assign enough people to make sure that it gets done. She feels like it's a lot. Councilman Papaleo suggested that the Technology Committee should take the lead in reaching out to River Dale. Councilwoman Busted thought the Technology Committee could meet and understand what the needs are to move forward and then we figure out as a Council what we need to get it done.

NEW BUSINESS –

OPEN TO PUBLIC

Motion by Councilman Chinigo, second by Councilman Gautier

All in favor 5-0

No public comments

CLOSE TO PUBLIC AND

**Motion by Councilman Gautier, second by Councilman Chinigo
All in favor 5-0**

ADJOURN WORK SESSION @ 6:25 PM

Motion by Councilman Gautier, second by Councilman Papaleo.

Stephanie Evans, RMC
Borough Clerk