

A REGULAR PUBLIC WORK SESSION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD HELD IN THE SYDNEY V. STOLDT, JR. COURT ROOM OF THE RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, 131 NORTH MAPLE AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, NEW JERSEY, ON FEBRUARY 26, 2025 AT 7:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER – OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT – ROLL CALL – FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Vagianos called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and read the Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. At roll call, the following were present: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Mayor Vagianos. Also present were Keith Kazmark, Village Manager; Heather Mailander, Village Clerk; and Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney.

Mayor Vagianos led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Amy McCambridge, a resident of Ridgewood, said that Mayor Vagianos tends to cut people off when they are talking about artificial turf, or he declares that the Village Councilmembers have already voted on a development plan for the Schedler property and asks people to “move along.” She stated that just because the Village Councilmembers voted on the Schedler plans does not mean that those plans are permanent, especially when those plans are wrong. Ms. McCambridge said that the public will fight back and will demand transparency.

Addressing Councilmember Mortimer, Ms. McCambridge stated that he continues to cite the study rendered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) about turf fields, although she believes that this study is flawed. A small sample of athletes were studied, who played on artificial turf for one hour per week, for a small duration of time. She said that student athletes in Ridgewood are spending 10 to 14 hours per week playing on turf fields. Ms. McCambridge stated that the USEPA is working on different crises at the same time, including the lead contamination in water. Although the USEPA finally acted on this crisis, it was too late to save the thousands of children poisoned by this contamination. Ms. McCambridge is afraid that the same scenario will occur with artificial turf. She said that Councilmember Mortimer should keep this in mind when citing studies performed by the USEPA.

Ms. McCambridge said that Councilmember Mortimer also stated that artificial turf will not affect bees. She said that he was correct in stating that bees do not pollinate fields, but replacing a living ecosystem with plastic does destroy the habitat for bees. It contaminates the soil and accelerates climate stress. Even though grass fields are not filled with wildflowers, they are surrounded by plants that bees rely upon to pollinate. Installing artificial turf creates dead zones where nothing can grow or thrive. Ms. McCambridge said that 70% of native bees nest in the

ground, and chemicals from artificial turf, that leach into the soil and groundwater, will eventually harm the bee population. Ms. McCambridge spoke about the heat islands generated by artificial turf, which will also harm bees, by hampering their ability to forage and regulate their body temperature. She said that humans need bees to live, just as much as people need water and trees.

Ms. McCambridge said that Councilmember Weitz justified the use of artificial turf, because the athletes in the Village need to be outside playing on turf fields. She stated that this viewpoint is also flawed. She said that giving children the ability to play outside has nothing to do with artificial turf. She feels that children should not be playing on artificial, chemical-laden fields. She said that the Village should be preserving natural grass and trees, which are needed for children's survival. Ms. McCambridge concluded by stating that she cannot understand why the Village is gambling with the health of children and why the Village Councilmembers cannot wait for more definitive studies to come out, regarding the damaging effects of artificial turf.

Cynthia O'Keefe, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she concurred with the comments made by Ms. McCambridge. Ms. O'Keefe said that some comments about artificial turf were made at the candidate debate held by the League of Women Voters, prior to the 2024 General Election/Village Council Election. A question was asked specifically about the installation of artificial turf on the Schedler property, and the response from Councilmember Mortimer was that the USEPA indicated that artificial turf was safe. Ms. O'Keefe reiterated that the USEPA report only dealt with crumb rubber. She said that Mayor Vagianos always brushes off residents' concerns about artificial turf, by stating that the Village Councilmembers have already voted on plans for the Schedler property and "it doesn't matter." However, Ms. O'Keefe said that it does matter to the residents of Ridgewood. She lives next to the Schedler property and has a private well, as do other residents.

Ms. O'Keefe said that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) wrote to the Village many years ago and expressly said that they do not recommend artificial turf. She quoted some comments from this correspondence, which read, "The HPO does not recommend artificial turf. We've had several projects referred to the Historic Sites Council for turf fields."

Ms. O'Keefe stated that she attended a recent meeting of the Board of Education (BOE). A small group of young individuals called "The Green Club" personally attended this meeting and expressed their concerns about climate change. These youths advocated for enhanced educational opportunities in line with Ridgewood High School's "Tradition of Excellence." Ms. O'Keefe wondered what kind of lesson is being taught to children if the Village is advocating the installation of artificial turf on the Schedler property, despite the fact that the turf field will be near private wells. She stated that the Schedler residents and others do not approve of artificial turf for health reasons, as supported by Green Ridgewood and the report rendered by Mount

Sinai. She stated that The Green Club members want to increase their advocacy, because they believe that actions have consequences.

Anne Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, thanked the Village Council for allowing hybrid access to meetings. Ms. Loving gave a shoutout to Councilmember Weitz and stated that she appreciated his questioning during budget meetings. She said that it appeared as if the other Village Councilmembers were making fun of Councilmember Weitz, for being so diligent on trying to cut corners.

Ms. Loving said that during one of the budget meetings, Mayor Vagianos stated that it takes decades to replace a shade-producing tree, referring to the tree that had to be taken down at Graydon Pool. Councilmember Weitz commented that he has lived long enough in Ridgewood to know not to “mess” with trees. Ms. Loving said that she heard a comment during the meeting that there was an increased budget request for crossing guard salaries in the amount of \$87,000.00. Ms. Loving felt that this was an excessive increase and asked for some clarification.

Ms. Loving said that there has been a recurring question asked of the Village Council in the past, which has been ignored. She believes that residents who serve on boards and committees should be paying their property taxes. She said that anyone not paying their property taxes should not have the ability to suggest how Village residents’ tax dollars are spent. Ms. Loving asked for an explanation as to why this procedure continues and why there is no rule stating that people serving on boards and committees, as well on the Village Council, must pay their property taxes. Ms. Loving said that it is an affront to the residents who do pay their property taxes.

Rurik Halaby, a resident of Ridgewood, said that a few months ago, employees from Ridgewood Water approached approximately 10 to 12 homeowners who use private wells for their drinking water, to ask them to connect to the Ridgewood Water distribution system. Mr. Halaby is of the opinion that residents living near Route 17 or near companies that use chemicals have a far more serious problem than any PFAS that may run off of an artificial turf field. Mr. Halaby feels that the Village Manager should contact the State Health Department to ascertain whether residents who have private wells can be required to connect to the Ridgewood Water system, which Mr. Halaby stated should not be too expensive.

There were no further comments from the public.

Addressing Ms. O’Keefe’s comments, Mr. Kazmark said that he has never read anything where SHPO has declared their stance against artificial turf. He asked Ms. O’Keefe to provide him with the document which she referenced stated that position. He acknowledged that perhaps this document was issued prior to his appointment as Village Manager. He said that after speaking with Jennifer Leynes, Program Specialist III, and other staff at SHPO, as well as members of the Village Engineering Department and the Village’s engineering consultant and historic

preservation consultant, it is his understanding that turf fields have been approved on SHPO-regulated properties throughout the State of New Jersey. Mr. Kazmark said that there is a full-sided, multipurpose turf field installed in Goffle Brook Park, a SHPO-regulated property that is part of the Passaic County Park System.

Regarding Ms. Loving's comments about the increase in salaries and wages for crossing guards, Mr. Kazmark stated that there is approximately an \$80,000.00 increase in the budget request for same. He said that this increase is due to a 1.5% increase in the overall contract for crossing guards and also due to two new crossing guard posts that have been added, at the request of Ridgewood residents and perhaps by the BOE as well. The two new posts are located on Doremus Avenue and Clinton Avenue.

3. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kazmark began his Village Manager's report by announcing that construction of the pavilion structure at Habernickel Park has commenced. Staff from the Engineering Department and Parks and Recreation Department are working alongside the contractor erecting the pavilion. He anticipates that this project should be completed approximately when the spring baseball season starts. This new amenity will provide shade, as well as protection during inclement weather.

The next budget meeting will be held tomorrow, February 27, 2025, starting at 5:00 p.m. All of the discussions points made during the past three budget meetings, as well as feedback received from the Village Councilmembers, will be reviewed with Department Directors and staff tomorrow. They will discuss what items can possibly be reprioritized and delayed until next year's budget.

Mr. Kazmark stated that he and Dylan Hansen, Director of the I.T. Department, have met with two sound vendors, to review the sound quality in the courtroom at Village Hall. Each vendor has performed an assessment of the dynamics at the dais and the backup in the audio room. Each vendor will be submitting reports and recommendations as to how the acoustics can be improved. Mr. Kazmark said that the Municipal Court uses dial-up for translation services, which also has to be taken into account.

Mr. Kazmark stated that the ordinance working group met last Friday, and there is an item on the agenda this evening for discussion pertaining to the wildlife feeding ordinance. At the next Village Council meeting on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, an annual food vendor licensing permit for the Health Department will be discussed, as well as an E-bike ordinance developed by Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney, and the Police Department. The tree ordinance will be discussed again at the March 5th meeting, as well as the lead service line ordinance for Ridgewood Water.

Mr. Kazmark said that the Ridgewood Health Department will be hosting a Blood Drive on February 28, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., in the Youth Lounge at Village Hall. Individuals may schedule an appointment by texting or calling 646-656-5798.

The Parks and Recreation Department has scheduled a trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show on Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Tickets cost \$80.00, which includes admission to the show and round-trip bus transportation. The bus will leave from the Graydon Pool parking lot at 7:45 a.m. and will return at approximately 5:30 p.m. Interested individuals may register via Community Pass.

Council Chat will be held on March 8, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., in the Caucus Room on level four of Village Hall. Interested individuals should call the Village Clerk's Office for reservations. Mr. Kazmark indicated that walk-ins are welcome, but those with reservations will receive priority.

A Seasonal Summer Job Fair will be held by the Parks and Recreation Department on March 12, 2025, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center at Village Hall. Young adults aged 16 and older are encouraged to attend the fair, to explore full-time and part-time employment opportunities, during the summer months, with the Parks and Recreation Department. Further information can be obtained by calling 201-670-5560.

Upcoming Village Council meetings are as follows: Work Sessions on March 5 and March 26, 2025; and Public Meeting on March 12, 2025. Work Sessions and Public Meetings commence at 7:30 p.m.

4. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Winograd asked anyone in the audience who cannot hear her to stand up, tap their ear or wave to let her know. She also suggested that people change seats to see if a different location would allow them to hear better.

Councilmember Winograd said that the last meeting of the Shade Tree Commission was canceled. At Super Science Saturday, which will be held on February 28, 2025, the Shade Tree Commission members will stress the value of "Big Trees." Members of the Shade Tree Commission are going to undergo a seven-hour core training course through Rutgers University. The training will encompass how to care for and maintain trees. Councilmember Winograd asked Christopher Rutishauser, Village Engineer, what the difference was between a conifer and deciduous tree.

Councilmember Winograd attended a Stigma-Free Committee meeting. They are in the process of rebranding and adding the tagline of "While we're proud to be stigma free, we're striving to be stigma free." This committee has partnered with other community organizations, including the

Lighthouse Foundation. Councilmember Winograd spoke about the theme of wellness. Details about the Lighthouse initiative will be forthcoming.

Councilmember Winograd also attended an ACCESS Committee meeting, during which Bergen County Commissioner Tracy Zur was present. The inclusivity swings at the Ridgewood Duck Pond playground have been broken, and Councilmember Winograd said that she was grateful to Mr. Kazmark and Bergen County for having the swings fixed, so that disabled children may enjoy them. Councilmember Winograd stated that members of the ACCESS Committee will undergo CPR training, in order to become certified and be prepared in the event of an emergency. She stated that Jaimie Davis is the new Chair of the ACCESS Committee, and Jessie Schwartzman is the new Vice Chair of the committee.

Councilmember Winograd met yesterday with the Project Pride Committee, which is also in the process of rebranding. It is felt that the use of the word “pride” creates some confusion, so they are considering renaming the committee this year, via a resolution. The committee’s first priority is installing new planters in the Central Business District (CBD), which will be larger than the existing planters, resulting in the plants in the containers needing less watering. Councilmember Winograd said that some of the existing planters have been damaged by cars. She stated that their second priority is decorating the lampposts in the CBD with soft lights during the holidays, similar to how the lampposts in Ho-Ho-Kus are decorated. She thanked Mr. Rutishauser and the staff from the Signal Division for doing the demonstration on a Ridgewood lamppost. She encouraged anyone who has any other ideas of how to decorate the CBD during the holidays to contact her. Councilmember Winograd said that donations to the Project Pride Committee are always welcomed, since decorating the entire downtown area is very expensive.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he met with the Ridgewood Arts Council on February 11, 2025. An upcoming event, “Children in the Arts,” will be held on March 30, 2025 at the Lester Stable. Any child involved in the arts, whether it be acting, music or dancing, are welcome to attend. The “Artist Talk” will be held on April 24, 2025 in the Ridgewood Library, featuring John Luckinbill, the Band Director from Ridgewood High School. The members of the Ridgewood Arts Council had a brainstorming session to come up with new fundraising ideas and to explore any available grants. Members of the Ridgewood Arts Council will be present at the Daffodil Festival/Earth Day celebration on April 27, 2025. This year’s theme is “H₂ Optimized and How to Protect our Water.” Councilmember Mortimer stated that this is his favorite event held in the Village.

Councilmember Mortimer stated that the Open Space Committee met on February 13, 2025 and welcomed a new member, Alex Pastore. During the meeting, they discussed when to hold “Park Walks” this year, since it was so successful last year. A new social media campaign will be launched called “Where in the Wood,” which will highlight different sections of Ridgewood and people can guess the locations. There was a discussion during the meeting about the Green Acres

diversion, and the final appraisal of that diversion will be discussed in the next few weeks. Members of the Open Space Committee were thrilled that the former Town Garage building was finally razed. They would like to take an active role in deciding how that land will be developed, including surveying Ridgewood residents for ideas. Councilmember Mortimer reminded everyone that the Open Space Assessment (\$.05 for every \$100 of assessment) goes directly to the Open Space Fund. The monies in this account were used by the Village to purchase the land on which Habernickel Park is currently situated. The bond used for this purchase has now been paid off.

Councilmember Mortimer said that the Open Space Committee and Parks and Recreation Department are collaborating to develop a trail plan in the Village. There are four parks with trails that are currently in bad shape, or never had trails at all, so this trail plan will propose how to refurbish the trails and how to create new ones for the enjoyment of residents.

Councilmember Mortimer stated that the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC) met on February 20, 2025. He stated that there were approximately 20 Ridgewood residents who attended the meeting to express their concerns. Councilmember Mortimer gave a shoutout to the Ridgewood Police Department and Engineering Department for always attending CSAC meetings and providing valuable information to residents. During the meeting, they discussed traffic concerns on West Saddle River Road, sight triangle obstructions in the Village, and the intersection of East Glen Avenue and Oak Street. Some residents spoke about the sidewalks on West Glen Avenue.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he was pleased to report that the stop light at the intersection of Oak Street and Franklin Avenue has been programmed to remain green longer for the drivers driving on Oak Street. This will allow for enhanced safety of pedestrians who are attempting to cross busy Franklin Avenue. There was an accident on Highwood Avenue, by the Friends Neighborhood Nature School, and there was a discussion on how to improve safety in that area. There was also an accident on Kenilworth Road, and residents came to the meeting to express their concerns. The Ridgewood Police Department and Engineering Department provided some recommendations, including LED stop signs and a big STOP sign painted directly on the road. Councilmember Mortimer noted excessive speeding when he visited Kenilworth Road, and he asked all residents to please be mindful of the posted 25 mile per hour speed limit. There was also some discussion about safety at the Park and Ride on Route 17, and the fact that there are no sidewalks on Racetrack Road.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he attended a meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Conservation (PRC) Board last night. Stacey Antine from HealthBarn attended the meeting and stated that this is the tenth year that HealthBarn has been in Ridgewood, although she has been in business for 20 years. Ms. Antine is planning some events to celebrate this 10th anniversary. Other discussion items included the improved lighting at Veterans Field, the new pavilion at

Habernickel Park, the renovation of Hawes Field, the Community Center, and the winter programs developed by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated that she had the pleasure of attending a celebration for Black History Month in the Community Center, which was organized by Deanna Schablik. The topic of the celebration was “Motown.” A professor from Bergen Community College gave a wonderful and historic presentation about how Motown was formed by Berry Gordy, which was once the biggest music company in the country. Deputy Mayor Perron said that they listened to music by Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Donna Summer, The Temptations, and others.

Deputy Mayor Perron reminded everyone who wants to have their dog march in the Daffy Dog Parade to put a costume on their dog. The parade will take place at 12:30 p.m. on April 27, 2025, during the Earth Day event.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she was very excited about the new pavilion at Habernickel Park. She said that she envisions a square dance taking place in the pavilion.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she attended a joint meeting between the Parks, Recreation and Conservation (PRC) Board and Green Ridgewood. During the meeting, they strategized on next steps for rain barrels and rain gardens.

The Planning Board held its Reorganization Meeting recently, but there were no applications which needed to be heard by the board.

The Steering Committee, which was formed to explore a Special Improvement District (SID) in the CBD, continues to meet. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 3, 2025.

The Central Business District Advisory Committee (CBDAC) met recently, during which time Mr. Rutishauser spoke about contamination at 132 and 120 Franklin Avenue (the former Town Garage site and the adjacent parking lot). Mr. Kazmark also spoke at the meeting and gave an update regarding the bus station.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she learns new things about the Village every week, and this week she learned that shredded paper can be comingled with the regular paper recycling at the curb. Other municipalities do not accept shredded paper, but the Ridgewood Recycling Center does.

Councilmember Weitz said that he attended a meeting of the Ridgewood Library recently. There are a lot of building renovations going on in the library. The mezzanine and study rooms have been completed. A new camera system has been installed, and they are planning on renovating the auditorium. A new HVAC system is going to be installed as well. The majority of these

renovations was paid for by the Ridgewood Library Foundation and Friends of the Library through their fundraising efforts. Councilmember Weitz stated that the library is a gem and is extremely well run.

Councilmember Weitz thanked his Village Council colleagues, Mr. Kazmark, Department Directors, and everyone else who are participating in the budget meetings.

5. PRESENTATION – ANNUAL UPDATE ON GREEN RIDGEWOOD INITIATIVES

Deputy Mayor Perron asked David Refkin, Chair of Green Ridgewood, and Beth Creller, Vice Chair of Green Ridgewood, to present their annual update regarding Green Ridgewood initiatives. Mayor Vagianos thanked Green Ridgewood for all of their efforts on behalf of Ridgewood's 26,000 residents.

Mr. Refkin began by stating that it has been almost a year since a presentation was given before the Village Council regarding ways to mitigate flooding. He reviewed the 2024 initiatives of Green Ridgewood, including flood mitigation recommendations. Mr. Refkin indicated that graduates from Columbia University developed a sustainability roadmap for the Village. Two Climate Fresk workshops were held to raise societal awareness of climate change. Green Ridgewood has issued four quarterly newsletters to date, and other municipalities have asked Mr. Refkin for guidance in developing their own newsletter. He praised Justin Jonsson, who is the editor of the newsletter.

Mr. Refkin stated that Michael Faherty and the Green Team initiated "Slow Mow May" and "Leave the Leaves" to remind residents to mow their lawns less frequently and to not rake up all of their leaves, to benefit insects that live in the ground over the winter. Mr. Refkin stated that the first Annual Earth Day student art contest was held in 2024, and a Community Energy Planning Grant was awarded to Green Ridgewood, which will help to measure the Village's energy usage.

Mr. Refkin then spoke about where the focus of Green Ridgewood will be for 2025. He said they would like to implement their additional recommendations to mitigate flooding. They will also be focusing on obtaining Community Energy Plan Grants (CEPG) to help the Village identify energy initiatives to increase clean energy production, reduce energy use, and cut greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable Jersey has an array of resources to support the creation of community energy plans. Mr. Refkin stated that there is a potential second project by Columbia University students focused on the Saddle River County Park. Mr. Refkin said that he often rides his bicycle on the bike path in the park, and he noted the poor condition of the park. He stated that a lot of assistance and cooperation are needed from Bergen County, the New Jersey Department of

Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and the communities bordered by the park to improve conditions at the park.

Mr. Refkin said that Green Ridgewood is involved in joint projects with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Board of Education (BOE). He spoke about water conservation communication and the slogan “Reduce, Replace, Relax.”

Mr. Refkin then reviewed the 20-point plan which was presented by Green Ridgewood before the Village Council last year, where the Ho-Ho-Kus Brook and Saddle River would be prioritized, green infrastructure would be utilized, and stormwater friendly pavement would be deployed. He emphasized that there is no “silver bullet” to solve flooding issues in the Village. He spoke about the four-inch rainstorms which occurred in a relatively short period of time in 2024 that caused severe flooding. Mr. Refkin stated that there is currently a drought that has lasted for six months, causing water levels to be 40% lower than what they should be at this time of year. Some recommendations to reduce the risk of flooding include increasing wetland capacity, installing detention and retention basins (since approximately 40% of Ridgewood is “paved over”), and exploring Bergen County-wide solutions up and down the stream, Mr. Refkin indicated that he has attended a few meetings with the Bergen County Commissioners to stress the need to develop solutions for the Saddle River County Park system, to alleviate repeated flooding in the Village, but it has been very difficult to obtain cooperation from them in this regard.

Mr. Refkin said that with the assistance of Mr. Kazmark, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has partnered with the Village to develop solutions to mitigate excessive flooding. He expressed the hope that this project will not be on the “chopping block” as drastic changes occur in the Federal budget. Another recommendation is to employ stormwater velocity reducers, such as planted vegetation beds, rain gardens and bioretention basins. Green Ridgewood is also recommending the expansion of the tree canopy throughout Ridgewood, which will provide multiple benefits related to the climate, rainfall and flooding. Mr. Refkin said that Ridgewood is probably the only municipality in Bergen County with an enhanced stormwater ordinance, and he thanked everyone for their efforts in developing this ordinance.

Mr. Refkin said that permeable pavement is encouraged to be used by developers and residents, and should be considered in Ridgewood. Green Ridgewood is recommending the streamlining of the permitting process for pervious solutions. He constantly reminds people at Planning Board meetings to consider the use of permeable pavement when constructing sidewalks and driveways.

Another Green Ridgewood recommendation is the promotion of business and homeowner education. In October, there will be a training program held for landscapers, so that they will learn how to install rain gardens, through the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Program.

Councilmember Winograd explained that a rain garden is a garden depressed into the ground and is used as a water retention area. She mentioned that there is a rain garden at Habernickel Park. Deputy Mayor Perron added that there is another rain garden by Graydon Pool. Mr. Refkin indicated that some students from Ridgewood High School are also building some rain gardens near the school.

Mr. Refkin thanked Alina Mordkovich who contacted Columbia University, since she is a graduate of Columbia, and that is how Green Ridgewood was able to obtain assistance from Columbia graduate students. He said that the graduate students from Columbia University did a fabulous job and rendered an 82-page sustainability roadmap. The report focused on flood mitigation, decarbonization, and Best Practices for managing the Village's use of water and energy. The report also suggested ways to financially pay for these programs. One of the key short-term recommendations contained in the report included the use of rain barrels. Mr. Refkin thanked Councilmember Winograd and Councilmember Mortimer for their assistance in bringing the use of rain barrels to the public's attention.

A medium-term recommendation contained in the Columbia report was the construction of underground detention basins, and a long-term recommendation of river redirection, with the assistance of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Ms. Creller then reviewed the decarbonization recommendations from Columbia University. She explained that power purchase agreements are a short-term solution, but they are not recommended at this time, considering the price fluctuations seen recently in energy markets. Ms. Creller said that another recommendation is electrification of the Village fleet and private vehicles. Another recommendation is to create opportunities for renewable energy within the Village. Ms. Creller indicated that Green Ridgewood was awarded a Community Energy Plan Grant (CEPG). There are different categories of renewable energy projects, and this grant allows the members of Green Ridgewood to brainstorm with the public to find ways to help the Village identify energy initiatives to increase clean energy production.

Ms. Creller said that the CEPG is just a planning grant. Submitting appropriate projects to Sustainable Jersey will lead the way to further grant monies (at least \$250,000.00) to be used for implementing one or more of the planned projects. Ms. Creller said that Green Ridgewood has consulted the Master Plan to come up with ideas for projects. A brainstorming session was held with the public during a Green Ridgewood meeting recently, to develop renewable energy ideas. Once the ideas are developed, they will be submitted to Sustainable Jersey for consideration. Ms. Creller thanked Deputy Mayor Perron for her assistance with submitting the grant application. Some of the energy ideas include charging stations for electric vehicles and solar panels for renewable energy near municipal locations.

Ms. Creller stated that Green Ridgewood is going to sponsor a second Annual Earth Day student art contest, which is open to all elementary students in Ridgewood. Over 80 children participated in the contest last year. All of the art submissions were displayed throughout the CBD during the month. This year's theme for the art contest will focus around water conservation. Mr. Refkin added that students at Ridgewood High School are doing amazing things on climate change. Enrollment in the AP Environmental Studies program doubled this year, and students attending the BOE meeting the other night asked for more climate change education in the high school. This environmental education is mandated by the State, but the State has provided no guidance in this regard. Deputy Mayor Perron indicated that Miles Luo, biology teacher at Ridgewood High School, is the high school liaison to Green Ridgewood.

Mr. Refkin reiterated that the projects they will be focusing on for 2025 include the implementation of additional flood mitigation recommendations, including rain gardens, rain barrels, working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and landscaper training. Green Ridgewood will use the grant they have received to measure Ridgewood's energy usage. There is a potential second project to be completed by the Columbia University graduate students, focusing on the Saddle River County Park (the Duck Pond). Green Ridgewood will spend more time discussing gas-powered leaf blowers and public health concerns surrounding their use. He said that one hour of using a two-stroke, gas-powered leaf blower is equal to driving a vehicle 1,100 miles. Mr. Refkin stated that gas-powered leaf blowers are noisy, cause stress to residents, and pollute the air.

Mr. Refkin said that the focus in 2025 will be on joint projects with the BOE and Parks and Recreation Department, in the areas of energy efficiency, rain barrels and gardens, and perhaps electric buses to transport children to and from school. Joan Hubertus has found some new grasses that require less mowing and less watering, and these grasses are being tested out at Ridgewood High School. The theme of the Daffodil Festival/Earth Day Fair will be "H2Optimized" for water conservation. Mr. Refkin stated that Green Ridgewood has been working with Richard Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, to make sure that the messaging sent out to the public by Ridgewood Water is clear and helpful.

Mr. Refkin said that Michael Faherty came up with the theme of "Reduce, Replace, Relax," as a secondary theme for the Daffodil Festival/Earth Day event. It will raise awareness of whether or not two-stroke gas leaf blowers really need to be used or whether electric-powered leaf blowers should be used, as well as how often lawns need to be mowed. Mr. Refkin said that Green Ridgewood is also working on developing a new website. He thanked all of the members of Green Ridgewood and Ridgewood residents who attend Green Ridgewood meetings. Green Ridgewood has seven subcommittees, including the Green Team; Communications; Earth Day Fair; Resource Management & Conservation; Green Building & Sustainability; Resilience, Flooding & Stormwater; and Finance.

Mayor Vagianos remarked about the impressive work being done by Green Ridgewood, and he thanked Mr. Refkin and Ms. Creller for their presentation.

6. DISCUSSION

A. RIDGEWOOD WATER

1. AWARD SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT – CORROSION CONTROL AT PASSAIC VALLEY WATER COMMISSION INTERCONNECTION

Richard Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, stated that this matter pertains to the award of a Sole Source contract for the furnishing and delivery of a corrosion control product to be used at the interconnection between Ridgewood Water and the Passaic Valley Water Commission (PVWC). It is recommended that Carus 4500, a corrosion control product, be used at the interconnection, and Carus, LLC, is the only supplier and provider of this particular product. This chemical is used by the PVWC and is different from the Poly/Ortho product utilized by Ridgewood Water. The PVWC has an open-water reservoir that is not treated for corrosion, and a corrosion control inhibitor needs to be added to water received by Ridgewood Water from the PVWC. Positive results were found when Carus 4500 was blended with the Poly/Ortho product used by Ridgewood Water. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Carus, LLC, of Peru, Illinois, in an amount not to exceed \$12,805.59. Funding is contained in the Water Utility Operating Budget, contingent upon the Village Council appropriating same in the 2025 budget.

2. AWARD CONTRACT – LEAK DETECTION SERVICES – INTERMEDIATE ZONE

Mr. Calbi stated that this item pertains to the award of a contract to have a leak detection survey performed for 88 miles of pipes (one-third) of the water distribution system. This is being done due to recurring low pressure issues in the Intermediate Zone, which includes Midland Park and part of Wyckoff. This work will be performed at night using acoustical equipment, since it is quieter at night than during the day. They will be focusing on the Intermediate Zone primarily. Three quotes were received. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to FSC Leak Detection, of Wayne, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$19,800.00. Funding is contained in the Water Utility Operating Budget, contingent upon the Village Council appropriating same in the 2025 budget.

3. AWARD CONTRACT – HVAC MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of a contract for HVAC maintenance and repair. On December 13, 2023, the Village awarded a two-year contract for HVAC (heating and

cooling systems) maintenance and repair services for several facilities operated by Ridgewood Water and the Village. For 2025, this contract will be used solely by Ridgewood Water. Maintenance and repair services for Village Hall have been turned over to another vendor and to the Signal Division.

It is recommended that the second year of this contract be awarded to Unitemp Mechanical Degrees, LLC, of Somerset, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$55,000.00. Funding is contained in the Water Utility Operating Budget, contingent upon the Village Council appropriating same in the 2025 budget.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked for confirmation that Unitemp Mechanical Degrees, LLC, would reimburse the Village for a portion of their services related to Village Hall for 2025, and Mr. Calbi confirmed that the Village will receive a credit on the service portion of the contract related to Village Hall.

Mr. Kazmark said that Deputy Mayor Perron asked for a detailed list of where these HVAC services would be performed. He said that the Village Councilmembers can contact him to obtain a copy of this list.

**4. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT –
CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION – EASTSIDE, MAIN AND
MOUNTAIN PFAS TREATMENT FACILITIES**

Mr. Calbi indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a professional services contract for construction administration and inspection services regarding the Eastside, Main and Mountain PFAS treatment facilities. These facilities are the final three of the twelve PFAS treatment facilities that fulfill a system-wide treatment plan to eliminate PFAS from drinking water, pursuant to the Administrative Consent Order issued to Ridgewood by the NJDEP. For the construction phase, the NJDEP has specific requirements for construction administration and inspection services for I-Bank funded projects. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Arcadis U.S., Inc., of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$1,498,278.61. Funding is contained in the Water Utility Capital Budget.

Mr. Kazmark remarked that this is the final step in completing the PFAS treatment facilities by the end of 2026, and he praised Mr. Calbi and his staff for their efforts. Mayor Vagianos said that it has taken a long time to get to this point in the buildout, and Ridgewood Water is providing a model for the entire nation on how to treat PFAS contamination.

**5. AMEND CHAPTER 145 – FEES – ESTABLISH 2025 RIDGEWOOD
WATER RATES, FACILITIES CHARGE, AND PFAS
TREATMENT CHARGE**

Mr. Calbi stated that this item deals with proposed increases to the water volume charge, PFAS treatment charge, and facilities charge for the Ridgewood Water fee schedule. These new rates increase the PFAS treatment surcharges and facilities charges, both of which vary by meter size. The proposed volume rate increase is 9%, or \$6.39 per 1,000 gallons (increased from \$5.86 per 1,000 gallons). The proposed facilities charge increase is 9%, which was last adjusted in 2018. The facilities charge covers the cost of maintenance of treatment distribution and metering. This charge is made by meter size as a fixed fee. Per quarter, the facilities charges would be \$35.95 for a meter measuring 5/8 inch by 3/4 inch (increased from \$32.98 for this size meter). Mr. Calbi stated that the quarterly PFAS treatment charge, made by meter size as a fixed fee, would be \$37.07 for a meter measuring 5/8 inch by 3/4 inch (increased from \$24.71). Mr. Calbi said that the average ratepayer who uses a 5/8 inch meter, using 7,000 gallons of water per month, will see an annual increase (11.7%) of \$81.24. He stated that the equivalent cost per gallon of that water still remains less than \$0.1 per gallon. These proposed rates will be posted on the Ridgewood Water website.

Mr. Calbi stated that after these proposed increases were presented before the Village Council on February 3, 2025, the increases were reviewed by Raftelis, professionals in the field of water rate setting and budgets. Raftelis rendered a review letter, which will be posted on the Ridgewood Water website. Raftelis has concluded that the 2025 budget is reasonable and appropriate, and that the budget has been developed in a manner that aligns with industry standards, sound principles for rate setting, and applicable State and local statutes. If approved, the new water rate ordinance will be introduced on March 12, 2025, with a final hearing on April 9, 2025.

Councilmember Weitz stated that while he was not originally happy with these rate increases, Mr. Calbi's presentation before the Village Council on February 3, 2025 made him comfortable with the increases. He thanked Mr. Calbi and his staff for giving such a professional presentation.

Mr. Kazmark said that during the presentation given by Mr. Calbi on February 3, 2025, Mr. Calbi also compared Ridgewood Water rates to other local water utility companies. He asked Mr. Calbi to elaborate on this comparison for the public. Mr. Calbi said that this comparison is part of the memorandum rendered by Raftelis, that will be posted on the Ridgewood Water website. He said that Ridgewood Water remains in the "middle of the pack" regarding water rates, when compared with other water utilities. Upon questioning by Mr. Kazmark, Mr. Calbi said that Ridgewood Water remains in the "middle of the pack" with regard to the PFAS charge increases. He stated that some of the water utilities shown on the comparison chart have not even begun to implement PFAS treatment charges, but he was confident that they will soon implement such

charges. Ridgewood Water has a \$25 million budget, in large part due to the PFAS investment that has to be made to rid PFAS from the drinking water. He added that overall operating expenses have only increased 2%.

Mr. Kazmark asked Mr. Calbi to elaborate for the public the other efforts being made by Ridgewood Water to defray the costs of the PFAS buildout. Mr. Calbi said that Ridgewood Water is researching every possible avenue for applicable grants. Through the Mayor of Glen Rock, Ridgewood Water has submitted a request to Assemblywoman Lisa Swain to share the cost of the main PFAS treatment plant in Glen Rock in the State Budget. In addition, Ridgewood Water continues to seek financing through the I-Bank, at very competitive rates (as low as 0%). Principal loan forgiveness by the I-Bank is given to Ridgewood Water when it is available, up to \$2 million per year. Mr. Calbi said that Ridgewood Water continues its litigation against the firms that manufactured these forever chemicals. He anticipates some court decisions concerning this litigation sometime in 2025. Mr. Calbi indicated that he and Robert Rooney, Chief Financial Officer, were contacted by the Village's insurance attorneys indicating that they are looking into recovering monies through insurance policies that predated environmental exclusions.

Councilmember Weitz stated that Ridgewood Water is abiding by the new governmental PFAS requirements, although the government did not provide funding to municipalities to accomplish the new acceptable levels of PFAS in the water. Councilmember Weitz said that Ridgewood Water is far ahead of the curve in meeting these requirements.

Upon questioning by Councilmember Winograd, Mr. Calbi said that the Raftelis memorandum and the proposed rate increases will be posted on the Ridgewood Water website this coming Friday, and the rates will become effective in the third quarter of 2025.

B. BUDGET

1. AWARD CONTRACT – THERMAL IMAGING CAMERAS – FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter pertains to the award of a contract to Strategic Safety Dynamics, LLC, of Smithtown, New York, in an amount not to exceed \$29,905.00, for the purchase of thermal imaging cameras for the Fire Department. The funds for this purchase were obtained from a grant through the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation. These funds were transferred directly to the Village of Ridgewood, and the Fire Department was instructed to make the purchase of these thermal imaging cameras directly.

2. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY COOPERATIVE PRICING
SYSTEM – PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT, SERVICE, AND
LICENSES FOR ACCESS CONTROL AND CCTV**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, through the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative Pricing System, for the purchase of equipment, service, and licenses for access control and CCTV. It is recommended by Lieutenant John Chuck of the Ridgewood Police Department that this contract be awarded to Open Systems Integrators, Inc., of Hamilton, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$194,000.00 per year. This vendor will provide technical support through software updates, hardware repairs, and licensing renewals. Lieutenant Chuck indicated in his memorandum that there is currently a \$2 million security system, running over 300 points of contact. Funding is contained in both the Capital Budget and 2025 Operating Budget.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked why the funds will be derived from both the Capital and Operating Budgets. Mr. Kazmark said that some of the funds will be used to purchase equipment with a useful life in exceedance of five years, which allows the funds to come out of the Capital Budget. Some of the funds will be used to purchase services, which must be paid through the Operating Budget.

Councilmember Mortimer asked where the 300 points of contact are located. Mr. Kazmark replied that these cameras are located throughout all municipal facilities.

3. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
COMMISSION OF NEW JERSEY COOPERATIVE PRICING
SYSTEM – NEW EQUIPMENT BODY FOR FORD F-250 PICKUP
TRUCK**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, through the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative Pricing System, for the purchase of a new equipment body for a 2020 Ford F-250 pickup truck for the Traffic and Signal Division. The current pickup has a plain pickup body with limited uses. The proposed truck body is a service body that will have lockable storage compartments, a liftgate, and an inverter to power work tools. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Cliffside Body Corporation of Fairview, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$24,531.00.

Councilmember Weitz asked whether it is worthwhile to install a new equipment body on a 2020 truck. Mr. Kazmark said that he posed this question to Rich Tarlton, Superintendent of the Traffic and Signal Division, and Mr. Tarlton feels that this purchase would be more economical

than purchasing a new truck. Councilmember Weitz asked if this was a diesel truck, and Mr. Kazmark said that he would find out and let Councilmember Weitz know.

4. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING – REPAIR AND RESURFACE SOMERVILLE TENNIS COURTS

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing contract for the repair and resurfacing of the Somerville tennis courts, and purchase of new nets. Nancy Bigos, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, is recommending that this contract be awarded to Sport Tech Acrylics, of Brewster, New York, in an amount not to exceed \$79,000.00. Funds for this project have been approved by Robert Rooney, Chief Financial Officer, as they are allocated within the balances of old capital accounts. Sport Tech Acrylics has done work in the Village in the past and Ms. Bigos has been very pleased with their product and results. These tennis courts are used by Ridgewood residents, as well as the junior varsity and freshman tennis teams at Ridgewood High School. Mr. Kazmark added that the costs of resurfacing tennis courts throughout the Village are shared with the Board of Education (BOE) on a staggered basis, with the Village and the BOE taking turns paying for same when resurfacing is needed.

5. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING – RESURFACING OF GLEN PICKLEBALL COURTS

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter involves an award of a Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing contract for the resurfacing of the four Glen pickleball courts. Ms. Bigos is recommending that this contract be awarded to Sport Tech Acrylics, of Brewster, New York, in an amount not to exceed \$39,000.00. This includes individual crack repair and complete resurfacing of all four pickleball courts. Funds for this project are contained in the Capital Budget (previous capital funds). The surface of the pickleball courts has deteriorated due to continued usage, the root system of trees adjacent to the courts, and weather conditions. These courts were converted from tennis to pickleball in 2019.

Councilmember Mortimer said that the Glen pickleball courts get a lot of usage, particularly by senior citizens. He asked that the resurfacing be done at a time which will provide the least amount of disruption to the pickleball players.

6. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING – PURCHASE OF TWO FREIGHTLINER SANITATION REAR LOAD PACKER TRUCKS

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the award of a contract, under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program, for the purchase of two Freightliner M2 rear load packer trucks for the Sanitation Department. Sean Hamlin, Recycling Coordinator and Supervisor of Solid Waste, is recommending that this contract be awarded to Premier Truck Sales & Rental, Inc., of Cleveland, Ohio, in an amount not to exceed \$523,600.00 (\$261,800.00 per truck). These trucks were previously rented by the Sanitation Department, and this purchase will be a rental buyout. There will be a discount of \$37,700.00 per truck, which will be applied toward the purchase of these two trucks. The purchase of these trucks will make the Sanitation Department fleet complete, for the first time in many years.

7. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – FOURTH ROUND HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the award of a professional services contract regarding the Fourth Round Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan. The scope of work is a lump sum of \$22,500.00 (Housing Plan \$6,500.00 and Fair Share Plan \$16,000.00). The only other costs that the Village may incur would be if Beth McManus, Village Affordable Housing Planner, needs to appear at any future Village Council meetings.

8. AUTHORIZE CHANGE ORDER – NORTH WALNUT STREET PARKING LOT – REMOVAL OF UNDERGROUND FUEL STORAGE TANKS

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item pertains to the authorization of a Change Order for the removal of abandoned underground fuel storage tanks at the North Walnut Street parking lot, which land is owned by the Village. The contractor, T. R. Weniger, Inc., who was hired by the Village to perform this work, has encountered soil and water contaminated by hydrocarbons in excess of bid quantities. The Village's Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP), VHB, has indicated that the additional contaminated soil to be excavated may total an additional 3,000 tons, while the bid specifications had an amount of 400 tons.

Christopher Rutishauser, Village Engineer, stated that he is in the process of cleaning up the property at 132 Franklin Avenue (North Walnut Street parking lot) and 120 Franklin Avenue (the former Town Garage property). Eight underground fuel storage tanks have been removed from the parking lot, which were from the former Texaco gas station that occupied the property. The tanks were abandoned in place in the late 1970s, consistent with the practices at that time (pumping product out of the tanks, filling them up with sand and water, and leaving them in

place). When the tanks were abandoned, no effort was made to address any contamination or releases from the tanks, and the insides of the tanks were not cleaned before being filled.

During removal of the tanks to date, extensive soil contamination was found to depths of up to ten feet below grade. Groundwater contamination has also been observed, requiring the use of a frac tank to collect the liquid for off-site disposal. Mr. Rutishauser confirmed that the contaminated soil to be removed may total an additional 3,000 tons, and the bid quantity was for 400 tons. VHB has indicated the need for additional laboratory analysis of samples, due to the increase in quantities. Upon questioning by Councilmember Winograd, Mr. Rutishauser stated that all of the tanks are now out of the ground.

A Change Order is requested in the amount of \$560,000.00. Mr. Kazmark indicated that due to the large amount of the Change Order requested, this request has been reviewed by the Village Auditors, Nisivoccia LLP, to ensure that the Village is acting within the purview of the Local Public Contracts Law. Nisivoccia has opined in writing that this Change Order would be permissible since the rate quoted in the vendor's bid package is not being changed, and only the amount of material to be removed and tested has changed. The contract duration must be extended by an additional 120 days, due to the quantity of the contaminated material encountered during excavation of the fuel storage tanks.

Councilmember Weitz asked how this remediation would be paid for, and Mr. Kazmark replied that there is enough money available in the bond to pay for this Change Order.

Councilmember Mortimer asked if there was a possibility of even more contamination in the area, and Mr. Rutishauser said that there was a chance that there might be. He indicated that the property is being excavated almost to the limits of the property line. Mr. Kazmark stated that the Village's LSRP is contracted to oversee this project for the Village, and will also assist the LSRP assigned to oversee the work being done at 120 Franklin Avenue (the former Town Garage property), so that there is a system of checks and balances.

Councilmember Winograd asked if any other type of contamination has been found on the site, such as drycleaning runoff. Mr. Rutishauser replied that there are drycleaning solvents in the groundwater plume, which originates on Chestnut Street. This washes through the sites at 120 Franklin Avenue and 132 Franklin Avenue. Mr. Rutishauser indicated that they have not found anything out of the ordinary, other than the hydrocarbon contaminants related to diesel fuel, waste oil and gasoline. They have not found any indications of leaded gasoline. Mr. Rutishauser indicated that unleaded gasoline was introduced to the market around 1974.

Councilmember Mortimer said that since an additional 3,000 tons of soil may need to be removed, he wondered if anything could be installed underground to help with stormwater runoff, before the soil is replaced with clean fill. Mr. Rutishauser replied that groundwater is

approximately 10 to 12 feet below grade. He located a map from 1850 that shows a river running through that general area. A subservice detention system could possibly be installed, but Mr. Rutishauser cautioned that this would need to be approved by the Village's LSRP and probably the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), since the NJDEP may have concerns that such an installation would cause any residual material on the site to go into the groundwater. Councilmember Mortimer said that he was just thinking of ways to help Green Ridgewood in their endeavors to alleviate flooding. Mr. Kazmark said that he could discuss same with the Village's LSRP to obtain her feedback. There were no objections to the Change Order by the Village Councilmembers.

Deputy Mayor Perron indicated that she spoke with Joan Hubertus from Green Ridgewood, who indicated that once the site has been remediated, there is a type of grass (Pearl's Premium Grass) that could be used there, that requires less mowing, has much longer roots, and needs less water once it becomes established. She suggested that perhaps a rain garden could be constructed on the site as well.

Mr. Rutishauser stated that he believes that the Village intends to restore the property at 132 Franklin Avenue as a surface parking lot, as it had been previously. Mr. Kazmark clarified that Deputy Mayor Perron was talking about 120 Franklin Avenue. Mr. Rutishauser said that he has never heard of Pearl's Premium Grass Seed, but he is familiar with using grass swales in stormwater management. He said that they produce a very good stripping effect to surface water runoff, by stripping hydrocarbons out of the water. He said that Pearl's Premium Grass sounds like it tolerates contaminant levels that other grasses may not. Mr. Rutishauser said that he will work with the Village's LSRP to determine what the final surface will be for 120 Franklin Avenue. He said that there may be a deed restriction due to any residual contaminated material that cannot be removed, and a deed restriction may require an institutional barrier between any residual contaminated material and surface materials.

Mr. Kazmark stated that from a procedural standpoint, the former owner of 132 Franklin Avenue is obligated to physically clean up the property and perform two years of environmental testing. Once recommendations are received from the Village's LSRP, Mr. Kazmark anticipates that discussions surrounding the use of the property could probably begin in early fall of 2025.

9. AUTHORIZE PROPERTY TAX REFUND – DISABLED VETERAN

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the authorization of a property tax refund to a 100% tax-exempt veteran. It is recommended that a refund check in the amount of \$2,464.31 be issued to the homeowner of 22 Carriage Lane, Ridgewood, New Jersey.

10. ANNUAL SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT PERMITS

Ms. Mailander said that this item was inadvertently omitted from the agenda this evening. However, since the Village Council operates under *Robert's Rules of Order*, this matter can be discussed this evening as an agenda item, if the Village Councilmembers consent to same. There were no objections from the Village Councilmembers to discuss the matter of annual sidewalk replacement permits this evening.

Mr. Rutishauser said that the Village Councilmembers had posed some questions regarding annual sidewalk replacement permits at a prior Village Council meeting. Mr. Rutishauser said that better control is needed regarding how many sidewalks are opened up in the Village at the same time. He said that there is one contractor in particular who likes to open up as many sidewalks as possible, since they possess an annual sidewalk replacement permit. However, some sidewalks must remain open until the tree roots, which uplifted the sidewalk slabs in the first place, are ground up. This results in complaints from residents, who state that they have to walk on the street because their sidewalk is dug up and they have to wait weeks before the tree root grinding can be accomplished by the Parks Department.

Mr. Rutishauser explained that Peter Affuso, in the Engineering Department, performs inspections to make sure that the sidewalks are constructed properly. Mr. Affuso works alongside the contractor and homeowner, as well as Declan Madden, the Village Arborist, if a round-out is needed to avoid a tree being removed. Mr. Rutishauser explained that all of these procedures take time, and that is why there is a backlog in the Parks Department, regarding tree root grinding. There is a clause in the relevant ordinance permitting the contractor to hire their own certified tree expert or licensed arborist, but Mr. Rutishauser said that no contractor has yet done so, since there is a cost factor involved. The charge for the Village Arborist to examine a tree is not charged to either the homeowner or the contractor. The availability of the Village Arborist is another factor which delays the grinding of the tree roots. Mr. Rutishauser said that the Parks Department, Village Arborist, and Engineering Department cannot keep up with the dozens of open sidewalks where the tree roots need to be ground.

Mr. Rutishauser said that the Village Councilmembers discussed the issuance of summonses to contractors who do not alert the Village that they plan to open up a sidewalk, in an effort to incentivize them to cooperate more with the Village, rather than to open up sidewalks in a random fashion. Mr. Rutishauser feels that if the Village is too "heavy handed" with the summons process that the cost of the summons will just be passed on to the homeowner by the contractor. From a municipal finance perspective, Mr. Rutishauser said that he is not sure which budget line item would be credited with the fines collected for violations. Since such a fine would be for a municipal violation, a portion of the fine does not have to be sent to Trenton, as is done with fines for traffic tickets.

Councilmember Mortimer thanked Mr. Rutishauser for his comments. He said that he was not sure if summonses were the way to move forward, since most residents replace their sidewalks after receiving a letter from the Village requiring the replacement of an uplifted or broken sidewalk. Mr. Rutishauser said that the Village tries not to issue summonses initially. The homeowners are usually sent a letter first, requesting them to fix their sidewalks within 60 days. These letters are usually generated as a result of someone being injured after tripping on a sidewalk or a complaint from neighbors. A second letter is sent to the homeowner if the repairs are not completed within 30 days, giving them another time limit within which to make the repairs. If the repairs are still not made after that time, then a summons will be issued. He said that there are currently three or four outstanding summonses pending at this time.

Councilmember Mortimer mentioned that there is one sidewalk contractor working in the Village who has “undercut” other contractors regarding sidewalk replacement. He feels that the issuance of annual sidewalk replacement permits results in cost savings to homeowners. Councilmember Mortimer is concerned about the repercussions of rescinding the annual permits, particularly since residents will be charged more by contractors. Councilmember Mortimer said that instead of rescinding the annual sidewalk replacement permits, he would prefer if the process could be streamlined, so that better control can be obtained by the Village.

Mayor Vagianos asked Mr. Rutishauser what the annual fee is for a sidewalk replacement permit. Mr. Rutishauser said that he is proposing to eliminate the annual permit and have permits issued on a case-by-case basis (\$50.00 per sidewalk location). Mayor Vagianos stated that it will cost a homeowner thousands of dollars to replace a sidewalk. Addressing Councilmember Mortimer’s earlier comments about how rescinding the annual permits would result in increased costs to homeowners, Mayor Vagianos said that the \$50.00 permit fee will be insignificant, relative to what homeowners will be spending to replace their sidewalks.

Councilmember Weitz said that a lot of revenue can be generated for the Village if contractors have to obtain a permit every time they work on a sidewalk. However, he said that he agrees with Councilmember Mortimer that costs to homeowners will be increased if a contractor has to obtain individual permits for each job. Councilmember Weitz said that he agrees that the process should be streamlined, so that better control can be obtained by the Village. He feels that the annual permits lower costs for residents. Deputy Mayor Perron said that she agreed with these comments.

Upon questioning by Councilmember Winograd, Mr. Rutishauser replied that three annual permits had been issued to contractors, but this has dwindled down to just one contractor in the last year or two. Councilmember Winograd asked if perhaps Mr. Rutishauser or the Village Councilmembers could actually meet with this contractor and talk to them about this issue. Mr. Rutishauser indicated that he has met with the contractor and communicated with them many times, but no satisfactory results have been obtained. Councilmember Winograd asked if the

annual permit could be declined for this vendor based upon nonperformance. Mr. Rutishauser said that the annual permit has already been issued to this contractor. He said that this contractor has obtained a solicitor's permit, so that they can solicit door to door on a single street asking homeowners if they need their sidewalks fixed. The contractor also sends requests through the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) to obtain copies of letters sent to homeowners by the Village, instructing them that they need to fix their sidewalks.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that the three companies listed on Mr. Rutishauser's memorandum have given her quotes to fix her own sidewalk, of her own volition. She suggested that contractors be warned that if they fail to notify the Village of impending sidewalk replacement in a timely manner, the Village will suspend its services (tree inspection and root grinding). Mr. Rutishauser said that it would be much easier to just issue a violation, as provided for in the relevant ordinance.

Councilmember Weitz said that it was obvious that this matter should be tabled until such time as some suggestions can be developed to streamline the process of obtaining sidewalk replacement permits. Mr. Kazmark said that it appears the general consensus of the Village Councilmembers is not to rescind the annual permits. He stated that he will meet with Mr. Rutishauser and his staff to develop some efficiencies that can be implemented at the staff level.

C. POLICY

1. RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LEGISLATION TO ALLOW PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES ON OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

Ms. Mailander indicated that the League of Municipalities has asked the Village to consider supporting a resolution which would allow local governments to publish legal notices on a local government's official website, instead of in the newspaper. Some New Jersey newspapers are no longer printing paper newspapers, but are rather publishing their newspapers digitally. The New Jersey Legislature enacted a law which allows municipalities that have to publish legal ads to do so on the digital format of those newspapers. This law ran until March 1, 2025, and the Legislature is now considering bills to extend the law until December 31, 2025. Being able to publish legal notices on the Village website will save the Village time and tax dollars, as well as ensuring the accuracy of the legal notices. Ms. Mailander said that sometimes legal notices are sent back and forth because newspapers make mistakes or leave out words. The legal notices could be posted on the Village website at no cost. Ms. Mailander is recommending that this resolution be adopted.

Councilmember Weitz that he fully supports the digital publication of legal notices on the Village website. Deputy Mayor Perron agreed, but stated that local newspapers are the Village's

partners. She stated that the media is so important to a vibrant democracy. Even though it will save money, Deputy Mayor Perron said that she is not in favor of “undercutting” the newspapers at this time. She said that newspapers rely on revenue from municipalities to stay in business.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he has spent over two decades in the publishing field, and he has witnessed print textbooks disappear. He said that he is in favor of publishing legal notices on the Village website, because even college textbooks have moved online. Councilmember Mortimer felt that most people will look online for legal notices, as opposed to printed newspapers. In addition, he stated that it will be easier for people to read the legal notices online, as opposed to struggling to read the super small newspaper print.

Mr. Kazmark agreed, stating that people now go to the municipal website to get answers to their municipal questions. Regarding Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment matters, Mr. Kazmark said that it would benefit residents to have these notices posted on the Village website since most people have to pay a subscription fee to gain access to media outlets online. He said that the *Star-Ledger* is no longer printing newspapers, and the *Bergen Record* circulation is minimal, at best. Therefore, people are less able to buy a printed newspaper today, as opposed to years past.

Councilmember Winograd said that she believes that publishing legal notices online will make them more accessible to the public and will save tax dollars. She said that the day will come when newspapers are no longer printed at all, and the Village should be prepared when that occurs. She said that the way to support newspapers is to pay for a subscription.

Mayor Vagianos said that the Village would save a significant amount of money by publishing legal notices online. He said that he agreed with both Councilmember Mortimer and Deputy Mayor Perron. He said that the cost of true democracy is hastening the demise of newspapers. Mayor Vagianos said that he does not support the publication of legal notices on the Village website at this time. He said that the end of physical newspapers will occur once all municipalities publish legal notices online.

Ms. Mailander said that there are three Village Councilmembers in favor of this resolution and two Village Councilmembers against it. This matter will be placed on the agenda for the March 12, 2025 Village Council meeting. Both Councilmember Winograd and Mayor Vagianos said that they will not be attending the March 12th meeting. Mr. Kazmark said that the vote outcome will be the same, with two in favor of the resolution and one against, so the resolution of support will be put onto the March 12th agenda.

2. ORDINANCE – PROHIBITION ON FEEDING WILDLIFE

Dawn Cetrulo, Director of the Health Department, and Carol Tyler from Tyco Animal Control were present at the meeting to discuss this agenda item. Mr. Kazmark indicated that the Village Council has discussed for quite a while developing modifications to the ordinance prohibiting the feeding of wildlife. Mr. Kazmark said that Deputy Mayor Perron worked with the Health Department in 2024 to make some public service announcements regarding the feeding of wildlife. Mr. Kazmark stated that some residents are concerned about other residents feeding deer and other wildlife, and how these actions can attract vermin.

Ms. Cetrulo said that the Village has an existing ordinance prohibiting the feeding of wildlife on Village-owned property. Since she has been receiving complaints from residents over the years about people feeding wildlife, which attracts rats, rodents, bears and Canadian geese, she has developed some amendments to the ordinance to restrict the feeding of wildlife on private property as well. The amendment would also regulate the types of bird feeders that can be used on private property. She said that residents are concerned about contracting H5N1 avian influenza or bird flu, as well as rabies and Lyme disease.

Ms. Cetrulo read the amendment to Section 105-50, Purpose, as follows: “The feeding of such wildlife is both detrimental to the animals and causes a public health nuisance and safety hazard detrimental to the health and general welfare of the public. Of special concern to public health is the increasing spread of bird flu, the H5N1 virus, and that deer and other rodents such as mice and rats carry ticks that carry Lyme disease, a physically and neurologically debilitating disease.” She then read the sections about the prohibition of feeding wildlife on private property, and the restrictions concerning the types and number of bird feeders allowed on private property. Bird feeders shall be raised at least eight feet off the ground and there would be a limit of three bird feeders per property.

Councilmember Mortimer commended Ms. Cetrulo for her efforts to develop the necessary amendments to the existing ordinance. He stated that he visited Wild Birds Unlimited on Route 17 in Paramus to ascertain the average height of bird feeder poles that they sell. Councilmember Mortimer said that bird watching is the second most popular hobby in the United States. He was told that the traditional bird feeder pole that they sell is eight feet tall, but six inches of that height is installed underground.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he also researched three other resources, including the Audubon Society, and he learned that bird feeder poles should be six feet off the ground or higher. He said that if the required height is made too high in the ordinance, it will impact people who are not tall enough, or who are disabled, to reach their bird feeders in order to replenish the feeders with seed. He suggested changing the wording in the ordinance amendment to read that the actual feeder (baffle or catch basin, but not the poles) be at least six feet in height so that no

wildlife can access the feeder. Councilmember Mortimer said that according to Cornell University's Ornithology Department, there are very few documented cases of avian flu in songbirds, translating to a very low risk of an outbreak among songbirds. He said that there is no official recommendation to remove feeders, unless the homeowners also keep chickens.

Deputy Mayor Perron thanked Ms. Tyler for attending the meeting this evening. She said that Ms. Tyler remarked at last year's Deer Forum that people have to stop feeding the deer, and that remark is what prompted Deputy Mayor Perron to begin work on amending the wildlife feeding ordinance. Deputy Mayor Perron suggested that the word "other" be removed from the sentence which states, "Of special concern to public health is the increasing spread of bird flu, the H5N1 virus, and that deer and other rodents such as mice and rats carry ticks that carry Lyme disease, a physically and neurologically debilitating disease." She said that deer are not rodents.

In addition, Deputy Mayor Perron feels that the sentence which states, "No person shall purposely or knowingly feed unconfined wildlife, including but not limited to birds, deer, wildfowl, raccoons or any other animal not kept as a domestic pet in the Village of Ridgewood on lands either publicly or privately owned," does not belong in the Purpose section, but rather belongs in Section 105-52, Prohibited Acts and Conduct. Deputy Mayor Perron also felt that the sentence stating, "No more than three (3) such feeders shall be permitted on any single property," should be in Section 105-52. She also felt that the sentence stating, "Feeding wildlife also increases the risk of exposure to rabies for humans and domestic pets by attracting potentially rabid wildlife," belongs in the Purpose section (105-50) rather than the Prohibited Acts and Conduct section.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she was in favor of all of the proposed amendments, and Councilmember Weitz concurred. He said that he has received complaints from residents who have neighbors who feed the wildlife. These residents complained that such actions cause ticks and droppings to be in their backyards, which is particularly concerning to residents with young children. Councilmember Weitz said that he agreed with the proposed changes suggested by Deputy Mayor Perron.

Mr. Kazmark asked Ms. Cetrulo to provide Ms. Mailander with revised amendments to the ordinance, so that it can be introduced at the next Village Council Public Meeting, and Ms. Cetrulo said that she would do so.

Councilmember Mortimer mentioned that any resident who is concerned that their bird feeders are attracting mammals can get hot pepper seed to put in their feeders. He said that birds do not have casein receptors and they are not impacted by the hot pepper. Councilmember Winograd thanked Dawn Cetrulo for all of her efforts to amend this ordinance.

D. OPERATIONS

1. AUTHORIZE EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS FOR REMOVAL AND REMEDIATION OF UNDERGROUND FUEL STORAGE TANKS AT NORTH WALNUT STREET PARKING LOT

This matter pertains to the authorization for Mr. Rutishauser to sign various manifests, as well as regulatory permit applications and other documentation, related to the removal and remediation of the abandoned underground fuel storage tanks at the North Walnut Street parking lot. Mr. Rutishauser will be available at the site, while the excavation of contaminated material is performed.

Mayor Vagianos asked if there should also be an alternate person authorized to sign documents, in the event that Mr. Rutishauser is unavailable to do so. Mr. Rutishauser said that this was a good suggestion, and he recommended that Mr. Kazmark be designated as the alternate signatory. Mr. Kazmark gave his consent to Ms. Mailander for his name to be added to the resolution authorizing him as an alternate signatory regarding this matter. There were no objections by the Village Councilmembers.

Deputy Mayor Perron suggested that if time is of the essence in getting this resolution approved, that a Special Public Meeting be held on March 5, 2025. Mr. Rutishauser indicated that he already has two documents that he must sign to submit to the facility receiving the contaminated material for processing. The facility must review the documents and review the laboratory analytics of what the material contains. Mr. Rutishauser is hoping to start a “haul out” of the contaminated material as soon as possible. The Village Councilmembers authorized Mr. Rutishauser to begin the process of hauling out the contaminated material as soon as he can, and Mr. Kazmark indicated that the signatory authorization resolution will be heard on March 12, 2025.

2. DECLARE POLICE VEHICLES AS SURPLUS PROPERTY

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with declaring three old police vehicles as surplus property. The vehicles are a 2011 Ford Crown Victoria (Car 20), a 2019 Chevy Tahoe PPV (Car 15), and a 2018 Chevy Tahoe PPV (Car 29). These vehicles need extensive repairs and have excessive mileage. The Police Department intends to replace these vehicles in 2025 with Ford Explorer PPVs. Enterprise Fleet Services will provide the cars.

Councilmember Mortimer related a story when he was in college and used to sell back old textbooks to the college bookstore. After selling back old books, students were allowed to get a sledhammer and whack an old junky car. He wondered if these police cars could be used to raise money for the Village.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that PPV means “Police Pursuit Version.” She noted that the Police Department intends to replace these vehicles with Ford Explorer PPVs. She spoke with Lieutenant Chuck regarding same, and he assured her that the Police Department is researching fuel-efficient models.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Boyd A. Loving, a Ridgewood resident, thanked the Village Council and Mr. Kazmark for moving forward with their attempts to improve the sound in the courtroom. He looks forward to hearing the recommendations from the vendors to improve the sound in the room. He said that people sitting in the back of the room still have difficulty hearing what is being said on the dais during meetings.

Mr. Loving said that there was a lot of discussion this evening about 132 Franklin Avenue and the tonnage of contaminated soil that must be removed from the property. He asked who is paying to have all of this work performed, whether it would be Ridgewood taxpayers or the insurance company who insured the Texaco gas station when it existed on that property. He expressed the hope that the Village is pursuing insurance claims against the people who contaminated the site in the first place, and that Village taxpayers will not have to pay for this remediation.

Mr. Loving said that there were also a lot of comments made this evening by the Village Councilmembers regarding the new pavilion at Habernickel Park. He said that some members of the public are concerned about future use of the pavilion, particularly whether or not the commercial entity operating at Habernickel Park (HealthBarn) will be able to reserve the pavilion for its own activities. Mr. Loving asked that a policy be put in place by the Village to assure the public that they will have equal (or more) access to the pavilion on a reservation basis as HealthBarn will have. Residents are concerned that HealthBarn will book the pavilion months in advance, preventing the public from enjoying the facility. Mr. Loving also asked that there be a public discussion when such a policy is being developed.

Mr. Loving said that there were comments made this evening about staff from Ridgewood Water approaching homeowners with private wells to convince them to hook up with the existing water distribution system. He said that this cannot be done in the State of New Jersey, unless there is an ordinance in place that allows such solicitation to be done. Mr. Loving said that the Health Department cannot mandate a resident to switch to “city water.” He said that the Health Department can shut down a private well, due to contamination, until the situation has been rectified. He said that unless the Village Council has plans to enact such an ordinance requiring residents with private wells to hook up to the Ridgewood Water system, these types of solicitations cannot take place.

Mr. Loving said Deputy Mayor Perron commented that residents can include shredded paper in their weekly cardboard/paper recycling pickup. Mr. Loving said that some residents have expressed concern that shredded paper wrecks the machines used to recycle paper products and causes fires. He said that the Village should look into this concern before recommending that shredded paper be included in recycling pickups.

Anne Loving, a Ridgewood resident, asked if she was correct in understanding a comment made this evening that the Village will be “kicking in” funds for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of HealthBarn. Ms. Loving asked whether the Village would be “kicking in” funds for other businesses in the Village that are celebrating milestone anniversaries. Ms. Loving stated that HealthBarn is a profit-making organization. She cautioned the Village Council about funding any celebration of this type.

Ms. Loving said that she has asked at prior meetings whether or not a policy would be set that requires all members serving on the Village Council, as well as on Village boards and committees, to pay their property taxes. She said that until she gets an answer to this question, she will keep asking it.

Rurik Halaby, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he was very impressed with the presentation given by Green Ridgewood this evening, as well as the discussions by Ms. Cetrulo, Mr. Rutishauser and Mr. Calbi. He congratulated the Village Councilmembers on such a well-run meeting this evening. Mr. Halaby said that he would like Mr. Hansen to ask the vendors examining the sound and acoustics in the courtroom to listen to the recordings of the meetings. He said that the sound on these videos is fantastic for people watching the meeting remotely. Mr. Halaby believes that the problem lies with the acoustics in the room and not the microphones.

Mr. Halaby spoke about the First Amendment and the rights of free speech and free press. However, he said that printed newspapers are fading away. He said that he wrote a letter to the directors of the *Ridgewood News* emphasizing the importance of a free press. Mr. Halaby said that there is nothing to read in the newspaper anymore. He said that he always compliments the writers of the *Shelter Island Reporter* for their fine reporting, but he does not feel the same way about the reporting done by the *Ridgewood News*. He said that he sympathized with the way newspaper companies are diminishing, as stated by Deputy Mayor Perron this evening, but it is a fact of life that newspapers are a thing of the past, and have no place in the future.

There were no further comments from the public.

Addressing Mr. Loving’s comments, Mr. Kazmark stated that the work at the North Walnut Street parking lot at 132 Franklin Avenue is a Village-funded project. The capital funds being used for this project were approved by prior Village Councils. He said that he could supply Mr. Loving with the dates such funding was approved. Mr. Kazmark said that it was an easy, natural

decision to have the work done at 132 Franklin Avenue, at the same time as work was being done at 120 Franklin Avenue.

Mr. Kazmark confirmed that there is a policy in place regarding the future use of the new pavilion at Habernickel Park. He said that HealthBarn will be treated like any other community group in the Village, including the Boy Scouts and Women Gardeners of Ridgewood, regarding requests to use the pavilion facility. Requests will be made through the Parks and Recreation Department and equal consideration will be given to all requests.

Regarding Mr. Loving's comments that some residents with private wells were approached by staff of Ridgewood Water to hook up to their system, Mr. Kazmark said that he was unaware of any actions seeking to force any resident with a private well to hook up to the municipal water system. He said that he and Mr. Calbi had a courtesy meeting with the four property owners with private wells, who live near the Schedler property, during which they spoke about the possibilities of these residents hooking up to Ridgewood Water, if the residents were interested in doing so. Mr. Kazmark said that this decision lies solely with the individual property owners.

Regarding Ms. Loving's comments about the Village funding the tenth anniversary celebration of HealthBarn, Mr. Kazmark stated that he and the Village Councilmembers get invited to anniversaries and grand openings all the time. He said that he was not sure where the "kick in" language came from, but he said that there was no budget appropriation, or even a discussion about a budget appropriation, regarding the Village contributing financially to such anniversaries or grand openings.

Regarding the comments by Ms. Loving that all individuals serving on the Village Council, and Village boards and committees, should be required to pay their property taxes, Mr. Kazmark stated that not all Ridgewood residents pay property taxes. He said that people who rent in Ridgewood do not pay property taxes. He said that he was not sure if Ms. Loving wanted to exclude all renters in Ridgewood from serving on the Village Council, Village boards or committees, which represents a lot of people. Mr. Kazmark does not believe it is lawful to require such individuals to pay their property taxes, and does not think that such a legal challenge would stand up in court, but he said that he would defer to the opinion of Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney.

Mr. Rogers replied that stating that no individual can volunteer their time to serve on a governmental entity because they don't pay taxes makes no sense to him. He said that sometimes people pay their taxes late, and this does not mean that they cannot serve on a committee in their municipality. Mr. Rogers stated that he has never researched this matter, but it does not make sense to him legally that someone would be banned from serving on a committee just because they haven't paid their taxes in a timely manner. He said that he is unaware of any mechanism

preventing individuals from doing so, and he does not feel that such a legal challenge would stand up in court. He said that he would research the matter if requested to do so.

Mayor Vagianos clarified that even though the project involving the property at 132 Franklin Avenue is being funded by the Village, the soil remediation work involving the property at 120 Franklin Avenue (former Town Garage site) is being paid for by the former property owner. Part of the agreement entered into when the Village purchased the property at 120 Franklin Avenue specified that the property owner would place money in escrow to pay for the cleanup of the contamination.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that, as early as 2015, she and Evan Weitz (as private citizens) were working on a grant application to obtain funds to clean up the contamination at 132 Franklin Avenue. At that time, the existing Village Councilmembers set aside approximately \$900,000.00 to be used for remediation of the site. She said that the Village was just waiting for the right time to perform the cleanup.

Addressing Mr. Loving's comments about the dangers of comingling shredded paper with cardboard/newspaper/paper recycling, Deputy Mayor Perron stated that recycling shredded paper is not "just a thought in the offing." She was told by the Recycling Coordinator today that the Village already recycles shredded paper, and such service is posted on the Village website.

Councilmember Winograd said that with regard to access to any public park or Village-owned facility, all of the Village Councilmembers believe in equal access for all and are very mindful of it. In addition, the Village has invested in software (Master Library) that would not allow anyone to overbook a Village facility or location. Councilmember Winograd said that Stacey Antine, owner of HealthBarn, is a partner with Ridgewood, and she cannot imagine Ms. Antine monopolizing the use of the new pavilion at Habernickel Park. Councilmember Winograd agreed with Mr. Kazmark's comments that he and the Village Councilmembers get invited to numerous celebratory events.

Regarding Ms. Loving's remarks about requiring the payment of property taxes for individuals who wish to serve on the Village Council, or Village boards and committees, Councilmember Winograd said that she and her husband pay taxes, but her adult children and mother do not pay taxes. If rules are initiated requiring individuals serving on boards or committees to pay their property taxes, Councilmember Winograd said that the Village will "box out" multigenerational family units and those who rent, which seems to be exclusionary to her. She said that the Village depends upon individuals volunteering to serve on various boards and committees, and she is grateful to those who volunteer. Mr. Kazmark agreed with Councilmember Winograd's comments and stated that he would be very reluctant to initiate such a policy.

8. RESOLUTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Mailander read Resolution #25-145 to go into Closed Session:

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Deputy Mayor Perron, seconded by Councilmember Mortimer, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council's Regular Public Work Session was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

Paul Vagianos
Mayor

Heather A. Mailander
Village Clerk