

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 JUNE 9, 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 7:30 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. Councilmember Weitz arrived a few minutes late to the meeting. Mayor Vagianos explained that Councilmember Weitz was late to this evening's meeting, because he was attending an Eagle Scout Court of Honor on behalf of the Village Council. Also present were Keith Kazmark, Village Manager; Jennifer Natoli, Deputy 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

Gerry DeAndrea, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he lives across the street from Benjamin Franklin (BF) Middle School. There is a fire hydrant to the left of his driveway, and cars always block both his driveway and the fire hydrant whenever there is an event being held at BF. Mr. DeAndrea distributed a handout to the Village Councilmembers and explained that the first picture showed Beverly Road, which is the street next to Ridgewood High School. Mr. DeAndrea said that he believed it was standard protocol for yellow lines to be painted on the street in front of fire hydrants to designate a no parking zone. He believed that North Van Dien Avenue was repaved a few years ago and the lines were never repainted. He described several pictures showing cars blocking fire hydrants. Mr. DeAndrea asked if someone could look into this matter and paint a yellow line by the fire hydrant near his house, so that people will be deterred from parking in front of the hydrant.

Mr. DeAndrea asked if someone could let him know when action would be taken on this matter. Mayor Vagianos asked Mr. DeAndrea to give his phone number to Mr. Kazmark, so that Mr. Kazmark may notify Mr. DeAndrea when appropriate action has been taken regarding his concerns.

Ellie Gruber, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she was disappointed at having received a letter from Mayor Vagianos recently, urging her to vote for Democratic candidates during the upcoming Primary Election. The letter indicated that this communication was paid for by the Democratic Committee of Bergen County. While this is not illegal, Ms. Gruber said that it was not "kosher" and that Ridgewood has a nonpartisan form of government, and this applies to all elections as well. Ms.

Gruber said that it was a pleasure to attend meetings where Democrats and Republicans are not “sniping” at one another, but rather working together for the good of the Village. Ms. Gruber told Mayor Vagianos that he has done a disservice to the residents of Ridgewood by mailing correspondence to all Ridgewood households publicly urging them to vote for Democratic candidates that Mayor Vagianos supports. Sending such a letter as a private citizen is a different matter, but Ms. Gruber stated that Mayor Vagianos should not have done so in his mayoral capacity.

Anne Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, thanked Ms. Gruber for her earlier comments. This week, Ms. Loving and her husband received a letter, with the outside envelope announcing that it was an “important letter from Mayor Paul Vagianos.” The enclosed letter was signed by Paul Vagianos, Mayor, Village of Ridgewood. Ms. Loving said that one would assume that the content of the letter had to do with local Ridgewood matters. However, this letter implored Ridgewood residents to vote for Democratic candidates of Mayor Vagianos’s choosing for Bergen County Commissioner. With Mayor Vagianos knowing that Ridgewood has a nonpartisan form of government, Mayor Vagianos used his position and title to sway the votes of Ridgewood residents. Ms. Loving said that these actions were completely wrong and inappropriate. She said that these actions reminded her of the time when Congressman Josh Gottheimer was in the courtroom during a Village Council meeting and Mayor Vagianos declared that New Jersey’s next governor was in the room. Ms. Loving cautioned Mayor Vagianos to refrain from such partisan antics in the future.

Ms. Loving said that June is Pride Month, which celebrates the diversity of human relationships. Juneteenth is celebrated on June 19th, when slaves were emancipated. She said that thanks to the strong voices of Boyd Loving, Jacqueline Hone, and others, the Village has acknowledged that June 19th should be respected as a holiday, a day on which unrelated meetings and events should not take place. Ms. Loving said that although June 12th is not a Federal, State or County holiday, it is widely known as “Loving Day.” In 1967, the Supreme Court ruled that interracial marriage was legal. Prior to this ruling, there were some states which would imprison people who entered into an interracial marriage. Richard and Mildred Loving of Virginia loved each other, got married and had children, but they were thrown in jail for doing so. Their case was eventually heard by the Supreme Court, and since that time interracial marriage has been deemed legal. Ms. Anne Loving expressed the hope that, one day, the Village Council would issue a Proclamation recognizing Loving Day.

There were no further comments from the public.

Addressing Ms. Gruber’s earlier comments, Mayor Vagianos said that he wanted to read a part of the letter referenced by Ms. Gruber. He read, “As Mayor, I’ve worked closely with our Bergen County Commissioners on issues large and small. From paving Ridgewood’s roads to money for lights at Vets Field, to helping us get sidewalks built for kids walking to school, Tom, Mary and Germaine have been our partners in helping us here in the Village whenever we need them. They are only a phone call away and they always pick up the phone to help us get things done for our residents.”

Mayor Vagianos said that this paragraph explains why he sent the letter. He said that these three individuals are partners of the Village, that the Village needs their assistance, and that they help the Village. Mayor Vagianos stated that some elected officials are not as responsive as these three individuals. He also stated that Congressman Josh Gottheimer brought the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the Village to address repeated flooding in the Village. Mayor Vagianos said that he supports these individuals because they support and help the Village. He said that he did not care whether they were Democrats or Republicans, and added that he has, on multiple occasions, said incredibly wonderful things in the courtroom about this district's Republican legislators, including Kristin Corrado, Christopher DePhillips and Al Barlas, because they have always supported Ridgewood.

3. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kazmark began his Village Manager's report by stating that the Engineering Department has been working to launch the 2025 road resurfacing and improvement program this summer. They are hoping to "break ground" this month, so that most of the work is completed while school is not in session during the summer. A meeting was held on May 29th with the residents of Beverly Road and Heermance Place, near Ridgewood High School. The Engineering Department is seeking to create a "turn-about" at that corner to improve traffic safety and provide better access for emergency vehicles. At this point, the affected residents are in support of the project. Mr. Kazmark thanked Dr. Mark Schwarz, Superintendent of Schools, and other representatives from the Board of Education who attended the meeting. This latter project will commence this summer as well.

Mr. Kazmark said that he and members of the Engineering Department also met with residents of Hammond Road, where curb construction is planned, and they also walked on Phelps Road last week, where a change is being proposed to eliminate a cut-through on that roadway. Mr. Kazmark said that the Village's Fiscal Aid 2024 project, through the New Jersey Department of Transportation, will focus on the resurfacing of South Pleasant Avenue, between Houston Lane and Grove Street. Bergen County is also planning to repave North Maple Avenue, from the Glen Rock border to the Ho-Ho-Kus border. Bergen County is also designing the repaving of Van Emburgh Avenue, from Washington Township to Route 17, and Prospect Street from North Maple Avenue to the Village line. Dates for these projects will be forthcoming from the County.

Mr. Kazmark stated that Beth McManus, the Village's Affordable Housing Planner, has been working to meet all deadlines for the Fourth Round Affordable Housing Plan, which must be submitted to the State by June 30, 2025. The draft plan was submitted to the County Planning Board and State Office on Planning Advocacy last week. The Fourth Round Affordable Housing Plan will also be reviewed by the Ridgewood Planning Board on June 12, 2025.

The Historic Sites Council meeting to hear the Zabriskie-Schedler application, was initially scheduled for June 19, 2025 (a date on which State offices are open), but it will be rescheduled sometime in July 2025 because of the Juneteenth holiday. Mr. Kazmark said that the entire Schedler application is available for review on the Village website.

Mr. Kazmark said that he received notification on Friday from the New Jersey Department of Health that the Enhancing Local Public Health Infrastructure grant and the Sustaining Local Public Health Infrastructure grant, which had previously been suspended by the administration in Washington, D.C., have been reinstated. This reinstatement came about as a result of the May 16, 2025 Federal court action which provided a preliminary injunction against the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the funding cuts. Mr. Kazmark indicated that the \$169,000.00 has been “freed up” for use by the Ridgewood Health Department in 2025.

Mr. Kazmark said that a Federal grant of \$70,000.00 (through Bergen County) for the installation of hearing loops in the courtroom, the Senior Lounge and the Youth Lounge has been awarded to the Village. The quick turnaround time was attributed to the actions of Bergen County Executive Tedesco and the Bergen County Board of Commissioners, who notified Mr. Kazmark today that the grant had been awarded. The Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) Communication Access grant, through the New Jersey Department of Human Services, has been accepted for final award in an amount not to exceed \$70,000.00. Carol Bialkowski, Director of Communications and Special Projects, will work on finalizing the contracts and getting the work completed sometime this summer.

Graydon Pool is now open, and will be open throughout the summer from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. through Labor Day.

Mr. Kazmark stated that irrigation regulations are in effect, which limit watering to two days per week. Residents with even-numbered addresses are permitted to water on Wednesday and Sunday, and residents with odd-numbered addresses are permitted to water on Tuesday and Saturday. No irrigation is allowed on Monday, Thursday or Friday. Mr. Kazmark indicated that Ridgewood’s Fire Chief John Judge will be working closely with the Fire Chiefs from the other municipalities serviced by Ridgewood Water (Wyckoff, Midland Park and Glen Rock) to ensure compliance with these water restrictions by developing some public service announcements. Compliance with the regulations will be critical during the summer months, when there may be drought conditions, to ensure adequate water reserves for fire emergencies.

The Ridgewood Guild will be sponsoring “Music in the Night” at various locations throughout the Central Business District (CBD) on Friday nights during the summer, beginning on May 30, 2025 and continuing through Labor Day.

The Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025. All polls will be open on that day from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Ridgewood Guild is sponsoring free “Movies in the Park” on Wednesday nights at 9:00 p.m. in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square, on June 11, June 25, July 9, July 23, August 6, and August 20, 2025.

Village Hall offices will be closed on June 19, 2025 in observance of the Juneteenth holiday. The Recycling Center will also be closed, and there will be no curbside bulk refuse pickup during that week.

Upcoming Village Council meetings are as follows: Work Sessions on June 25 and July 2, 2025; and Public Meetings on June 11 and July 9, 2025. All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m.

4. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Winograd said that Pride Day took place on Saturday, and she thanked the members of the Pride Committee, the Ridgewood Guild, Mayor Vagianos, and everyone who helped to organize this event. This event was bigger this year, since there was a marketplace sponsored by the Ridgewood Guild.

There was a joint Fields Committee/Board of Education meeting which took place last Tuesday and there was a lot of discussion about how the weather has impacted the use of athletic fields in the Village. The sport most affected by field closures has been girls’ flag football, where 50% of their games have been canceled, necessitating the team to utilize alternative sites outside of Ridgewood. Councilmember Winograd stated that the Father’s Day Maroons Soccer Tournament will take place this coming weekend. Councilmember Winograd said that the Board of Education has hired an architectural firm to assess whether or not the field at Benjamin Franklin Middle School could be made into a full-sized field, so that it may be utilized when the artificial turf fields at Ridgewood High School flood. The presentation by the architectural firm was supposed to take place during this meeting, but it did not. Although the Fields Committee does not typically meet during the summer, a joint hybrid Fields Committee/Board of Education meeting has been scheduled for the first Tuesday in August (August 5, 2025).

Councilmember Winograd said that she was very thankful that the Village has received the Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) Communication Access grant in the amount of \$70,000.00, through the New Jersey Department of Human Services, which will enable hearing loops to be installed in the courtroom, Senior Lounge and Youth Lounge. Councilmember Winograd thanked the representatives from Bergen County who assisted in applying for the grant on behalf of the Village, as well as Ms. Bialkowski and members of the ACCESS Committee who spearheaded this effort.

Councilmember Winograd thanked Councilmember Mortimer for his efforts in designating Ridgewood as a Bee City USA again this year. Thanks to Ridgewood being designated as a Bee City and Tree City, Councilmember Winograd said that “Mulch Monday” has now picked up a corporate sponsor that will financially contribute towards this initiative and physically help in this endeavor. For Mulch Monday, Councilmember Winograd said that they may have as many as 80 volunteers this year to help mulch the tree wells in the Central Business District (CBD).

Last week, Councilmember Winograd said that the Zabriskie-Schedler house was once again toured by the Newcomers Club of Ridgewood, which needed a venue for an upcoming party. Councilmember Winograd said that the Zabriskie-Schedler house will not work at the current time for this purpose, since there is a lack of hardscaping, such as patios, walkways and driveways. However, she encouraged members of the public to contact her about touring the house, particularly during the warmer months when the sun is shining on the house.

Councilmember Winograd reminded everyone to vote in the Primary Election tomorrow. She also reminded the public that anyone with a graduating senior in their household should pick up a mail-in ballot, so that their child can vote in the November General Election. Councilmember Winograd wished all fathers a Happy Father’s Day.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he had nothing new to report. He said that he attended Pride Day this past weekend and he was very proud to witness the inclusivity shown in the Ridgewood community. Councilmember Mortimer said that he was also very proud of serving as Village Council Liaison to the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC). A stop sign has been painted on the street at the intersection of Kenilworth Road and Laurel Road.

Councilmember Weitz said that he had nothing new to report. He said that he wanted to publicly congratulate [Mickey Fenster] who earned his Eagle Scout badge this evening.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that the Pride Day event was fantastic this year, including the musical entertainment and Mayor Vagianos’s welcoming address. She said that especially in today’s social climate, it is important to recognize people’s dignity and their right to love whomever they love.

The Ridgewood Library held its annual English as a Second Language Program year-end celebration on June 6, 2025, which recognized people from 35 different countries.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that the Planning Board is having a Special Public Meeting on June 12, 2025, to review the Village’s Fourth Round Affordable Housing Plan. Beth McManus, the Village’s Affordable Housing Planner, will give a presentation at the meeting to explain the housing plan, which must be submitted by the end of June, 2025.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that “Park Walks” have continued in the Village. She gave a tour of Habernickel Park last weekend. Deputy Mayor Perron said that “Music in the Park” will be held every Saturday night in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (weather permitting). She thanked Andy Meyer for organizing “Music in the Park.” She encouraged everyone to attend. Deputy Mayor Perron mentioned that at the Graydon Pool Opening Day for Seniors event, there were a lot of seniors dancing. She thanked the Community Center, Deanna Schablik, and all of the volunteers who made this event a success, including the teenagers. Deputy Mayor Perron said that the Secret Gardens Tour which took place yesterday was a delightful event, when people were able to explore gardens at ten homes in Ridgewood and Ho-Ho-Kus.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she and Mayor Vagianos attended the Ridgewood Board of Education’s “State of the Schools Address.” She said that it was interesting how the Board of Education is dealing with the distribution of elementary school children who live on the west side in the Village.

Green Ridgewood met last week and there was a lot of discussion during the meeting about the work being done by the graduate students from Columbia University’s Climate School regarding an assessment of the Saddle River Park System (Capstone Project), which contains a path that runs through six municipalities. Deputy Mayor Perron said that this park system has been subjected to flooding, erosion, and other problems. These students will assess these problems and offer recommendations regarding maintenance and sustainability. Deputy Mayor Perron said that Green Ridgewood has its new website up and running, and she encouraged everyone to visit the site for helpful hints and information concerning the environment, such as water conservation, rain barrels and rain gardens.

The Central Business District Advisory Committee (CBDAC) meets this coming Thursday, June 12, 2025. The meeting will be held in person in the Senior Lounge on the first floor of Village Hall. During the meeting, there will be two presentations. One presentation will be given by Ms. Bialkowski regarding the new bus shelter, and the other presentation will be given by two high school students who will share their ideas about how to make the CBD more vibrant and inviting. Deputy Mayor Perron said that the July CBDAC meeting will be a “Happy Hour,” and there will be no CBDAC meeting in August.

Mayor Vagianos thanked Luke D’Orio and Ryan Abamonte from the Signal Department for their stellar assistance during Pride Day which was held recently. They scrambled to erect tents and chairs in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square before the inclement weather started. Mayor Vagianos said that, during his welcoming address, he told everyone how proud he was to be the mayor of a community that celebrates its diversity with bouncy houses, hayrides, marching bands, a fair with over 40 vendors, and Pride flags flying everywhere. He described the event as

“magnificent” and he thanked everyone who helped to organize this event, particularly Councilmember Winograd who spearheaded this event seven years ago. Mayor Vagianos also thanked the Ridgewood Guild, the Ridgewood High School Marching Band, and Police Chief Forest Lyons. He said that despite the rain, no one’s spirits were dampened and, to everyone’s delight, a rainbow appeared in the sky after the rain stopped.

Mayor Vagianos said that the day after Pride Day, the third annual Holi Festival was held in the parking lot at MacMurphy’s Restaurant. This is a holiday celebrated by the Indian community and marks the beginning of spring, signifying new beginnings. Mayor Vagianos said that this is a time for mending broken relationships. It is a time during which people throw colored powder over one another with reckless abandonment, and celebrate family unity. Mayor Vagianos thanked the Indian, Hindu and Sikh communities who have brought so much “color” to the Village of Ridgewood by celebrating the Holi holiday.

Mayor Vagianos said that he attended a meeting of the Community Center Advisory Board (CCAB). The CCAB is planning on making a presentation at a Village Council meeting on July 9, 2025 regarding the topic of expanding senior programming in the Village.

Last week, Mayor Vagianos attended a meeting of residents who were concerned about crime in the northern New Jersey area. These residents asked Republican Assemblymen and Senators Kristin Corrado, Al Barlas and Chris DePhillips to attend this meeting.

5. DISCUSSION

A. RIDGEWOOD WATER

1. AWARD CONTRACT – GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) SOFTWARE

Rich Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, indicated that this matter pertains to the awarding of a contract for Geographic Information System (GIS) software support and upgrades for the Village of Ridgewood and Ridgewood Water. This contract will be for a three-year period, awarded annually through December 31, 2028, and will have a total contract price of \$90,600.00 (billed in increments of \$30,200.00 per year). The contract runs from July to July every year. This cost will be split between the Village of Ridgewood and Ridgewood Water. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), Inc., of Redlands, California, in an amount not to exceed \$30,200.00 per year. ESRI is the sole supplier of this software support. Funding is accounted for in the Ridgewood Water Operating Budget.

2. AWARD CONTRACT – GRANULATED ACTIVATED CARBON (GAC) TREATMENT SYSTEM – MOUNTAIN PFAS TREATMENT FACILITY

Mr. Calbi explained that this matter pertains to the awarding of a contract for the purchase of a Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) Treatment System (vessels) for the Mountain PFAS Treatment Facility, which is located in Wyckoff, New Jersey. Per the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Administrative Consent Order issued to Ridgewood Water, all 12 treatment facilities must be operational by the end of 2026. In order to prevent delays, these vessels are being procured before actually breaking ground at the Mountain PFAS Treatment Facility site. Two bids were received on May 16, 2025, and it is recommended that the contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, Calgon Carbon Corporation, of Moon Township, Pennsylvania, in an amount not to exceed \$245,340.00. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Capital Budget, and will be paid through the New Jersey I-Bank.

Mr. Calbi pointed out that his memorandum indicates that the Mountain PFAS Treatment Facility is undergoing final review by the NJDEP and should be advertised by the end of May 2025. Mr. Calbi stated that approval was received from the I-Bank and the project was advertised on June 6, 2025, with a bid opening scheduled for July 8, 2025.

3. AWARD CONTRACT – GRANULATED ACTIVATED CARBON (GAC) TREATMENT SYSTEM – EASTSIDE RESERVOIR PFAS TREATMENT FACILITY

Mr. Calbi explained that this matter pertains to the awarding of a contract for the purchase of a Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) Treatment System (vessels) for the Eastside Reservoir PFAS Treatment Facility, which is located in Ridgewood. Per the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Administrative Consent Order issued to Ridgewood Water, all 12 treatment facilities must be operational by the end of 2026. In order to prevent delays, these vessels are being procured before actually breaking ground. Two bids were received on May 16, 2025, and it is recommended that the contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, Calgon Carbon Corporation, of Moon Township, Pennsylvania, in an amount not to exceed \$303,523.00. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Capital Budget, and will be paid through the New Jersey I-Bank.

Mr. Calbi pointed out that his memorandum indicates that the Eastside Reservoir PFAS Treatment Facility is undergoing final review by the NJDEP and should be advertised by the end of May 2025. Mr. Calbi stated that approval was received from the I-Bank and the project was advertised on May 29, 2025, with a bid opening scheduled for July 1, 2025 for the treatment facility itself.

4. AWARD CONTRACT – GRANULATED ACTIVATED CARBON (GAC) TREATMENT SYSTEM – MAIN PFAS TREATMENT FACILITY

Mr. Calbi explained that this matter pertains to the awarding of a contract for the purchase of a Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) Treatment System (vessels) for the Main PFAS Treatment Facility, which is located in Glen Rock, New Jersey. Per the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Administrative Consent Order issued to Ridgewood Water, all 12 treatment facilities must be operational by the end of 2026. Two bids were received on May 16, 2025, and it is recommended that the contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, Calgon Carbon Corporation, of Moon Township, Pennsylvania, in an amount not to exceed \$245,340.00. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Capital Budget, and will be paid through the New Jersey I-Bank.

Mr. Calbi said that this phase of the project is still waiting for one final approval from the I-Bank, which would give Ridgewood Water authorization to advertise.

5. AWARD CONTRACT – BANK STABILIZATION AT HO-HO-KUS BROOK ALONG THE DUNHAM TRAIL

Mr. Calbi indicated that this matter pertains to the awarding of a contract for bank stabilization for a 20-inch ductile iron pipe (DIP) water main which runs along the Ho-Ho-Kus Brook. The bank of the Ho-Ho-Kus Brook along the Dunham Trail has eroded severely in the vicinity of an existing 20-inch water main, resulting in the immediate need for bank stabilization for approximately 320 feet along the west bank of the brook between Spring Avenue and Grove Street. The work consists of backfilling soil and stones over the exposed pipe to prevent erosion and extending and enforcing the bank with riprap. There were a total of 17 bid packages requested, with nine contractors attending the mandatory pre-bid site meeting, and five bids were submitted on April 30, 2025. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, Colonnelli Brothers, Inc., of Hackensack, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$347,100.00. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Capital Budget. Mr. Calbi said that he anticipates reimbursement of \$120,000.00 of that cost from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding that was already approved for the Village.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked if there will be any plantings while this work is being completed. Mr. Calbi said that there will probably be plantings along the trail, but not along the bank. He explained that it will be a stone-hardened bank, similar to other bank stabilization projects which have been completed. There was a discussion about how this work will help to give the existing trail along the brook some longevity.

6. AWARD CONTRACT – ROAD RESURFACING AND REPAIR IN RIDGEWOOD AND GLEN ROCK

Mr. Calbi indicated that this matter pertains to a partial award, utilizing the Village of Ridgewood paving contract, for the paving of streets in Glen Rock and Ridgewood. Seven bids were received on April 9, 2025, ranging from a low of \$4,169,988.05 to a high of \$5,190,670.00. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, J. A. Alexander, Inc., of Bloomfield, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$450,000.00. This vendor has previously successfully paved for the Village. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Capital Account.

7. AWARD CONTRACT – ROAD RESURFACING AND REPAIR IN WYCKOFF

Mr. Calbi indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract for road resurfacing and repairs of streets in Wyckoff. Ridgewood Water performed water main replacements in Wyckoff along Hartung Drive and Carlton Road, including residential services to the newly installed water main. Ridgewood Water intends to have these streets paved utilizing Wyckoff's 2025 Road Improvement Program. On May 28, 2025, Wyckoff received bids for this project. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, Smith-Sondy Asphalt Construction Co., Inc., of Wallington, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$125,000.00. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Capital Account.

8. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND VIDEO PRODUCTION – PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN FOR RIDGEWOOD WATER IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Calbi explained that this matter pertains to the awarding of a professional services contract for public engagement content for Ridgewood Water. The goal is to share media content that will educate the public on the water utility. Over the course of six month, MediaCutlet will produce a series of videos, site coverage, and worker testimonials that highlight the \$150 million investment that Ridgewood Water has made in PFAS treatment, lead pipe replacements, water conservation, and infrastructure upgrades. The proposal covers project management and video production, which includes a videographer, lighting, cameras, editing, captioning, and interviews. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to MediaCutlet, of Red Bank, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$54,250.00. Funding is contained in the Ridgewood Water Operating Budget.

Councilmember Mortimer asked if Ms. Bialkowski will be involved in the production of the videos and approval of the length and content of the videos. Mr. Kazmark stated that the three principals on this project would be Mr. Kazmark, Mr. Calbi and Ms. Bialkowski.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she was pleased to see that this public outreach will include the use of videos. She asked what the term “site coverage” meant. Mr. Calbi said that site coverage would include such things as drone footage and live footage on the ground while work is actually happening, such as vessels being placed at PFAS treatment facility sites. Mr. Calbi said that he gave a tour of the Prospect PFAS treatment facility in Glen Rock to the Ridgewood and Glen Rock Fire Department staff. He said that until one views the treatment facility, one does not understand the breadth of what is being built. These videos will enable the public to get a bird’s eye view of what work is actually being accomplished by Ridgewood Water.

B. BUDGET

1. AWARD CONTRACT – CONCESSION STAND AT TRAIN STATION

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the awarding of a contract for rental of the concession stand at the train station. In June 2024, Boxcar was awarded a three-year contract to provide a concession stand at the train station, with two options to renew for an additional year for each option. The first year of the contract expires on June 9, 2025, and the second year of the contract will be from June 10, 2025 through June 9, 2026. It is recommended that year two of the three-year contract be awarded to Boxcar, of Chatham, New Jersey, at a payment of \$600.00 per month, with utilities included in the monthly rent.

2. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER STATE CONTRACT – FORD F-350 PICKUP TRUCK – RECYCLING

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item pertains to the awarding of a contract, under State contract, for the purchase of a 2025 Ford F-350 pickup truck for the Recycling Division. This truck will be used for special bulk metal collections. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to the Route 23 Auto Mall, LLC, of Butler, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$56,415.00. This new vehicle will replace truck #SW-273 in the Recycling Division.

3. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM – FORD F-350 LIFTGATE

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the awarding of a contract, under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program, for the purchase of a lift gate for the Ford F-350 pickup truck for the Recycling Division. This lift gate will assist staff members in the collection

of heavy appliances for special bulk metal collections. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to FDR Hitches, of Hawthorne, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$4,650.00.

4. **AUTHORIZE CHANGE ORDER – PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
CONTRACT – NEW JERSEY LICENSED SITE REMEDIATION
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – UNDERGROUND TANKS AT
NORTH WALNUT STREET PARKING LOT**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the authorization of Change Order #1 for the services of a New Jersey Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP), as these services pertain to the removal of underground storage tanks (USTs) discovered at the North Walnut Street parking lot site, as well as soil and ground water contamination. The services of an LSRP are needed to address encountered contamination, to collect soil and ground water samples when contamination is encountered, and to document the closure of the USTs with the NJDEP. It is recommended that the Village continue its professional relationship with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), Inc. (formerly Brinkerhoff Environmental), the firm that the Village has used in the past for environmental issues encountered in this location. This Change Order in the amount of \$75,185.29 includes additional professional environmental services related to the underground fuel tank closures, as well as funds to pay for the effort incurred when the additional USTs were discovered. Mr. Kazmark added the representative from VHB is also working on a reimbursement application, in an effort to recover 75% of the costs for LSRP services and the costs of the project itself.

5. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER STATE CONTRACT – LIBERTY
DIGITAL RECORDING SOFTWARE AND SOUND UPGRADES
IN SYDNEY V. STOLDT, JR., COURTROOM**

Dylan Hansen, Director of the I.T. Department, said that before every Village Council meeting, the I.T. Department tests the microphones to make sure that they are functioning correctly. On June 4, 2025 at approximately 5:00 p.m., before the regularly scheduled Village Council meeting, they tested the microphones and only half of them were working. Mr. Hansen informed Mr. Kazmark and the meeting was postponed until this evening. Although Mr. Hansen and his staff checked the entire system (software and hardware), and they could not find anything amiss with the system, the system was still not functioning properly. The system was upgraded to the latest firmware, which necessitated I.T. staff to rebuild all of the configuration files, and the system came back online. Mr. Hansen said that the sound engineer told him that he cannot get parts for the current system anymore, since it is no longer being produced.

Councilmember Mortimer corroborated the fact that the sound engineer told him that the current system in the courtroom is so old, that they do not make replacement parts anymore for the system. If something breaks with the system, it cannot be fixed. Mr. Kazmark added that not

only were half of the microphones not working on June 4, 2025, but there was absolutely no output to Swagit or the Youtube channel. The inability of the Village to broadcast the Village Council meeting to the public takes away hybrid access and the ability of the public to watch the meeting from home.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he spoke with the sound technician who was in the courtroom last Friday, and he was told that the courtroom was a very hard room to configure for sound, particularly because the ceiling is arced. Councilmember Mortimer said that the current system in the courtroom is so old that the microphones are set at a fraction of their sensitivity and not on full power (to prevent feedback). That is why the microphones are not the cause of the sound issues in the room. Councilmember Mortimer said that the current microphones are rated the best at 10 inches to 12 inches away. He said that the main upgrade being proposed is a commercial grade digital sound processor, which he described as the “brain” that will run the system. The sound processor will block noise and echoes, which will enable the existing microphones to be used at full capacity. The courtroom will be divided into four different zones. Two speakers will be added to the back of the courtroom (zone 4) so that the sound will be the loudest in that zone.

Councilmember Weitz asked if there is any guarantee that buying the extra equipment and software will improve the sound quality in the courtroom. Councilmember Mortimer said that he asked the sound engineer what would be needed if the additional sound system upgrades did not improve the sound in the room, and the sound engineer told him that additional speakers would be necessary, which cost \$800.00 each.

Councilmember Weitz asked why the amount of \$6,930.00 is being spent on training. Mr. Hansen replied that the amount of \$6,930.00 is for both training and installation of the new audio equipment, which will take four days to complete. Councilmember Weitz asked how long the new audio system will last. Mr. Hansen replied that when he first began working for the Village, the first sound system lasted between eight to ten years, and the current system has lasted about ten years. Since the courtroom is used for Zoning Board of Adjustment meetings, Planning Board Meetings, Village Council meetings, and Municipal Court hearings, the sound system gets heavy use. Councilmember Mortimer added that the sound equipment, consisting of hubs, digital sound processor, amp, speakers, sound card and audio mixers, is all brand new and is state-of-the-art technology. It will take six to eight weeks to receive the audio components, and four days to install them.

Councilmember Winograd said that the cost of the new sound equipment is money well spent, since it will ensure that the Village Clerk will be able to capture what is being said during meetings with the Liberty Court Recorder Software and will also ensure engagement with the public. She thanked Mr. Hansen and Councilmember Mortimer for investigating the sound system for the courtroom. Mayor Vagianos echoed Councilmember Winograd’s comments.

C. POLICY

**1. AUTHORIZE PLACE TO PLACE TRANSFER OF LIQUOR
LICENSE – EXPANSION OF PREMISES – STEEL WHEEL
TAVERN**

Mr. Kazmark stated that this item deals with authorization by the Village Council of a place to place transfer of a liquor license held by Steel Wheel Tavern. Steel Wheel Tavern holds a consumption liquor license, which covers the basement and first floor of the building. The liquor licensee has now purchased the second floor of the building and plans to renovate the building and expand the liquor license to include the second floor. The expansion of the liquor license to the second floor requires a place to place transfer. The licensee has filed the place to place transfer paperwork and advertised the transfer twice in *The Ridgewood News*. Police Chief Lyons has no objection to the expansion of the liquor license and the transfer fees have been paid.

D. OPERATIONS

**1. AUTHORIZE NJDOT 2026 MUNICIPAL AID GRANT – WEST
RIDGEWOOD AVENUE RESURFACING**

Mr. Kazmark stated that this matter deals with authorization by the Village Council for a grant application to be made for repaving of West Ridgewood Avenue. The Engineering Department is in the process of submitting the 2026 New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Municipal Aid Grant application, for the project entitled “West Ridgewood Avenue Resurfacing.” The NJDOT’s criteria for the grant requires that the street must be a significant Village thoroughfare. West Ridgewood Avenue runs from the CBD west to the municipal line with Midland Park, and is also the primary access road to Ridge School. The work will also include construction of ADA-compliant ramps along the route being resurfaced, since there are presently none in that area. It is estimated that this project will cost \$679,000.00.

2. ANNUAL RENEWAL OF LIQUOR LICENSES

Mr. Kazmark stated that this item pertains to the annual renewal of liquor licenses in the Village. Every year in June, the Village Council renews liquor licenses, since their terms run from July 1 through June 30 of each year. The Village has 17 liquor licenses, with 8 consumption licenses, 7 distribution licenses, and 2 club licenses. The liquor licensees must file an application with the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and pay renewal fees to the ABC and to the Village. A tax clearance certificate must also be issued by the New Jersey Division of Taxation. Once these tasks have been accomplished, the Village Council may consider renewal of the liquor licenses.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she could not understand how there could be seven distribution licenses, since she only knew of three liquor stores in the Village. Councilmember Winograd said that one of the distribution licenses is “pocketed.” Mr. Kazmark said that supermarkets that sell liquor are also licensed, such as Stop & Shop and Greenmarket. He asked Ms. Natoli to supply the Village Councilmembers with a complete list of the liquor licenses in Ridgewood.

3. AUTHORIZE GRANT APPLICATION FOR NJ TRANSIT BUS STATION AT VAN NESTE SQUARE

Carol Bialkowski, Director of Communications and Special Projects, stated that she has been working with Millennium Strategies to apply for the Local Transportation Project Funds Grant, through the NJDOT, in the amount of \$100,000.00 for the purchase and installation of a custom bus shelter at Van Neste Square. The size of the proposed bus shelter will be 12 feet by 12 feet, and will be constructed of aluminum and tempered glass, with custom stonework at the base, six-foot long iron benches with a central armrest, solar-powered lighting, and an historically appropriate cupola on top. This project would also entail an extended tree well in the parking lot and a patio tree well (both with trees) to make the area more attractive. Ms. Bialkowski added that inside and outside security cameras will also be included in this project, at the urging of the Police Department.

Ms. Bialkowski said that she just attended a meeting with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), and they have recommended Handi-Hut as a vendor. Handi-Hut is located in Clifton and has been in business for over 50 years. The HPC suggested the formation of a type of “tourist bureau” near the bus shelter, offering brochures with QR codes linked to the New Jersey Transit Bus schedule and to local events posted on the Village website. The Engineering Department has estimated that this project will cost approximately \$129,300.00, which would include electric service improvements.

Councilmember Mortimer asked how tall the stonework at the bottom of the shelter would be. Mr. Kazmark replied that the height of the stone base is being discussed at the current time. The Police Department is requesting that the stone base be somewhat lower to ground level, so that they can see if anyone is sleeping inside the shelter on the floor. Ms. Bialkowski added that Handi-Hut would not be constructing the stonework base, but the Village would hire a mason to do the construction. Councilmember Mortimer asked if a picture of an actual bus shelter constructed by Handi-Hut could be viewed by the Village Councilmembers, and Mr. Kazmark said that he would forward a color picture of the bus shelter supplied by Handi-Hut. The only difference is that the bus shelter would measure 12 feet by 12 feet and would not be rectangular. Councilmember Mortimer asked if there was a 12 foot by 12 foot bus shelter picture which he could view, and Ms. Bialkowski said that there was no picture available which would depict the custom-made bus shelter that is proposed.

Mr. Kazmark said that he is focusing strictly on the grant at the moment, and when and if the grant is received, then they would work on a rendering of what the actual bus shelter will look like. Councilmember Winograd pointed out the proposed layout of the bus shelter and tree wells, which was attached to Ms. Bialkowski's memorandum. Deputy Mayor Perron asked if color copies of the bus shelter could be brought to the next CBDAC meeting.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Boyd A. Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, said that there was an accident recently at the Board of Education administrative offices, where a car accidentally ran into a transformer on the ground that was located next to the parking lot. Mr. Loving said that the Village is planning on erecting this new bus shelter in the Prospect Street parking lot. He suggested that some bollards be placed around the new bus shelter so that a car does not accidentally drive into the bus shelter and damage it.

Mr. Loving said that Mr. Kazmark reminded everyone this evening to make sure to turn off their sprinklers while it is raining. Mr. Loving reminded the Village Councilmembers that Code 269-48 requires that everyone who has an automatic sprinkler irrigation system in the Village have an automatic rain sensor attached to it, so that if it rains ¼ inch or more, it automatically shuts the irrigation system down. Mr. Loving said that this regulation is obviously not enforced, since he has witnessed sprinklers operating in the middle of rainstorms. In addition, residents are watering their lawns on days when they are not supposed to be watering their lawns. Mr. Loving said that a better job needs to be done to enforce these regulations.

Mr. Loving said that some streets in the Village were resurfaced after some water mains were installed; however, the resurfacing was defective since puddling occurs in various places after it rains. One example is at the intersection of Grove Street and South Irving Street. He expressed the hope that taxpayers are not paying to have these "mistakes" fixed.

Mr. Loving asked for an update on the taxi stand at the train station, specifically whether year two of the two-year lease has been paid by the tenant.

There were no further comments from the public.

Regarding the new bus shelter, Councilmember Winograd said that bollards were discussed with the Police Department and they are looking into the matter. Regarding the taxi stand, Mr. Kazmark said that he believed the tenant is/was overseas and the Engineering Department will be meeting with the tenant shortly to determine the status of the tenancy.

7. RESOLUTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION:

The Deputy Village Clerk read Resolution #25-255 to go into Closed Session:

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Councilmember Winograd, seconded by Councilmember Mortimer, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council's Regular Public Work Session was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Paul Vagianos
Mayor

Jennifer Natoli
Deputy Village Clerk