

**A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING 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 JULY 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 7:32 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. ACCEPTANCE OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Bills, Claims, and Vouchers, and Statement of Funds on Hand as of June 30, 2025, be accepted as submitted. Councilmember Mortimer seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Council minutes of May 28, June 9, and June 11, 2025, having been reviewed by the Village Council and now available in the Village Clerk's Office, be approved as submitted. Councilmember Winograd seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

**4. PROCLAMATIONS**

**A. PROCLAIM JULY PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH**

Councilmember Mortimer read the following Proclamation, after which there was a round of applause:

**B. HONOR CHARLES DIMARCO FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE ON THE  
CITIZENS SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Mayor Vagianos asked the Village Councilmembers to join him on the floor, as well as Charles “Charley” DiMarco. Councilmember Mortimer, the Village Council liaison to the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee (CSAC), read the following Proclamation:

There was a resounding round of applause, and then Mr. DiMarco thanked everyone for this recognition. He stated that the important work of CSAC would not have been possible without the support of Mayor Vagianos and the Village Councilmembers, and prior Village Councils. He thanked Village staff, particularly the Village Clerk's Office, Engineering Office, Police Department, Fire Department, and Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. DiMarco also thanked all of the Ridgewood residents who have expressed their safety concerns and suggestions over the years at CSAC meetings, so that Ridgewood could be a safe community and "home" for everyone. There was another resounding round of applause.

Mayor Vagianos thanked Mr. DiMarco for his 25 years of service on the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee. He said that many residents have children who are either attending currently, or have attended, Ridgewood schools, and those children benefited from all of the safety enhancements made at the direction of Mr. DiMarco and the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee.

**C. PROCLAIM JULY AS DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH**

Mayor Vagianos invited those present this evening for Disability Pride Month (members of the ACCESS Committee) to join him and the Village Councilmembers on the floor. Councilmember Winograd said that she is the Village Council liaison to the ACCESS Committee, which she described as "door opening" for individuals with disabilities. Councilmember Winograd then read the following Proclamation:

After the Proclamation was read, a member of the ACCESS Committee thanked everyone for this Proclamation. There was a resounding round of applause, and pictures were taken with the Disability Pride Flag.

Mayor Vagianos expressed how honored he felt to be a “tiny cog” in ACCESS’s “big wheel.” He said that he has been working with Jaime Davis, Chair of the ACCESS Committee, and has learned so much from her about those with disabilities. He thanked all of the members of the ACCESS Committee for all of their hard work on behalf of individuals with disabilities.

**D. HONOR LUKE PASH – 2025 GATORADE TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AND GREATEST DISTANCE RUNNER IN BERGEN COUNTY HISTORY**

Mayor Vagianos asked Luke Pash and those in attendance with him this evening to join him and the Village Councilmembers on the floor. Mayor Vagianos said that Luke is a four-time All-American with one more National Championship to conquer in the future. Luke is also a four-time New Jersey State Meet of Champions Champion and is the greatest distance runner in Bergen County history. Mayor Vagianos said that Luke will continue to compete at the University of North Carolina in cross-country and track and field. As Luke’s family and coach looked on, Mayor Vagianos read the following Proclamation:

After the Proclamation was read, Luke Pash thanked the Village Council for this unexpected honor, and his coach for his unwavering support. Mayor Vagianos said that he and all Ridgewood residents will be following Luke's career in the future, since he is a "hometown hero." There was a resounding round of applause.

#### **5. RECOGNITION OF RIDGEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL COACH DEIRDRE TOBIN – BOYS TENNIS COACH OF THE YEAR**

Mayor Vagianos asked Deirdre Tobin to join him and the Village Councilmembers on the floor. He stated that Ms. Tobin was named Boys Tennis Coach of the Year, and he wanted to present her with a certificate in recognition of this achievement. Mayor Vagianos said that his daughters are athletes and he told them that one day they would coach their sons. He said that women who coach young men change the young men's attitudes and perspectives for the better.

Ms. Tobin thanked the Mayor and Village Council for the honor bestowed upon her. She expressed how much this recognition means to her. She has loved being a "three season" coach in Ridgewood for the past 23 years (at both Ridge Elementary School and Ridgewood High School). She agreed how important it was for women to coach both men and women. There was a resounding round of applause.

#### **6. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Sheila Brogan, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she attended a CSAC meeting 20 years ago at the fire station, when she was a young Board of Education member interested in pedestrian safety. Ms. Brogan said that she met Charley DiMarco "who seemed to know everything" about traffic and pedestrian safety. She thanked the Village Council for recognizing Mr. DiMarco's volunteer service to the Village this evening. Ms. Brogan credited Mr. DiMarco with many of the safety enhancements developed in the Village over the past 25 years. She congratulated Luke Pash and Deirdre Tobin for their achievements.

Pete Maciejewski, a resident of Ridgewood, said that this was his first time physically attending a Village Council meeting, although he watches the meetings on YouTube. He thanked the Village Councilmembers for all of the things they do for the Ridgewood community as public servants. He said that although he may disagree with the Village Councilmembers about some things, he felt that the Village Councilmembers are sincerely trying to act in the best interests of all Ridgewood residents. Mr. Maciejewski said that he has young children and he appreciates the efforts of the Village Councilmembers to try to expand field space for children to play on, in the Village. He has been to athletic facilities in neighboring towns and feels that there is a lack of playing fields in Ridgewood. He again expressed his gratitude to the Village Councilmembers and said that he is confident thousands of Ridgewood residents feel the same way.

Saurabh Dani, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he heard the presentation and subsequent discussion at the last Village Council meeting regarding the Fourth Round Affordable Housing Plan submitted by the Village. He said that he did not hear the term “PILOT” mentioned during any of these discussions. He emailed Ms. Mailander asking if a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) program would be negotiated with Kensington (resulting in any revenues collected in lieu of property taxes not being shared with the Ridgewood Board of Education). Mr. Dani said that Ms. Mailander replied that such an agreement is not being considered at the current time.

Mr. Dani stated that Kensington Senior Living, LLC (“Kensington”), has been attempting to build an assisted living building in Ridgewood for a while, and it was Mr. Dani’s understanding that Kensington expressed their desire to be considered for a PILOT program, with regard to the assisted living building they plan to build on North Maple Avenue. Mr. Dani stated that he hoped the Village is not considering establishing a PILOT program with Kensington as it relates to the construction of the assisted living facility.

Denise Lima, a resident of Ridgewood, thanked the Village Council and those involved in advocating for the installation of a radar speed sign, that was recently installed on East Glen Avenue. Trees which had been blocking a speed limit sign on East Glen Avenue were also trimmed, so that the sign would be more visible. She said that these were good first steps in getting drivers to slow down on East Glen Avenue. Ms. Lima said that a good next step would be the installation of a pedestrian-activated crosswalk sign at the corner of Northern Parkway and East Glen Avenue, since that particular intersection has been the site of many accidents.

Ms. Lima said that the Fourth of July festivities, including the parade and fireworks, were outstanding this year. She thanked everyone who was involved in organizing these events and for cleaning up afterwards. Due to increased safety and security measures, Ms. Lima said that many of the parking lots were blocked off this year in the evening. She asked the police where the handicapped parking was located, after searching unsuccessfully to find a handicapped parking space, and they admitted that there were no handicapped parking spaces left. Ms. Lima said that the three to four handicapped parking spaces in the Graydon Parking lot were already filled by 6:00 p.m. Ms. Lima wondered how this situation could have occurred, considering all of the discussion this evening regarding disability accommodations.

Ms. Lima said that there are a lot of natural disasters occurring throughout the country, and she wondered what type of disaster recovery plan Ridgewood has in the event of a natural disaster occurring. She wondered if there was a central point of contact, where residents should go in the event of a natural disaster occurring, and what types of notifications would be sent out in the event internet and phone communications were not working. Ms. Lima said that there was no such information contained on the Village website directing residents what action to take in the event of a natural disaster occurring. She suggested that such continuity planning be established so that residents are clear in this regard.

Ms. Lima said that she received information from Ms. Mailander regarding the Village's fleet. She said that roughly 45% (86 vehicles) of the Village's fleet is composed of either SUVs or trucks, and she cannot envision this number of vehicles being out on the road at the same time. She wondered why these vehicles cannot be leveraged/shared by different Village departments in order to optimize their use.

There were no further public comments.

Councilmember Winograd thanked Mr. Maciejewski for his lovely comments, and also thanked the Village Clerk's Office for their hard work in ensuring that the Proclamations read this evening were written and distributed. Mayor Vagianos echoed Councilmember Winograd's sentiments, and asked for the audience to give a round of applause to Ms. Mailander, who has worked for the Village for almost four decades. There was a resounding round of applause.

Addressing Mr. Dani's question about a PILOT program between the Village and Kensington, Deputy Mayor Perron stated that during the discussions regarding the Affordable Housing Plan and Kensington Senior Living, there has never been any discussion regarding a PILOT program.

Councilmember Weitz said that Ms. Lima brought up an excellent point regarding the lack of handicapped parking spaces during the Fourth of July fireworks event. This topic was discussed at the "closeout" Fourth of July Committee meeting held on July 7, 2025. Councilmember Weitz said that ticket sales were at a record high this year, and he feels that this is one of the reasons why handicapped parking spots ran out so quickly. This is the first year this problem has occurred, and it will be addressed by the Fourth of July Committee next year. Councilmember Weitz apologized to Ms. Lima for the unavailability of handicapped parking spots this year.

Mr. Kazmark confirmed that Ms. Mailander responded to Mr. Dani's inquiry, via email this past Monday morning, stating there have been no discussions regarding a PILOT program between the Village and Kensington Senior Living. Addressing Ms. Lima's concerns that no handicapped parking was available to her during the Fourth of July fireworks, Mr. Kazmark said that the lack of handicapped parking was actually brought to his attention by two residents since the Fourth of July events. This matter is on the agenda for an upcoming internal meeting between the Village and the Fourth of July Committee.

Regarding Ms. Lima's inquiry as to whether or not the Village has an emergency preparedness plan, Mr. Kazmark indicated that he has emailed Ms. Lima the link to the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Emergency Preparedness Guide. This 30-page guide is published on the Village website. Mr. Kazmark reminded everyone that the reverse 911 emergency notification system was updated last year with a multitude of new email addresses and cell phone numbers (for text messaging). This update was overseen by Jeremy Kleiman, the Village's OEM



Coordinator. This emergency communication system is also used when there are any emergencies encountered by Ridgewood Water.

Regarding the Village fleet numbers mentioned by Ms. Lima, Mr. Kazmark reminded everyone that the Police and Fire Departments operate 24 hours a day. He said that the staff of Ridgewood Water and the staff of the Water Pollution Control Facility oversee the water mains and the sanitary sewer system and are on the road at all hours of the day and night. Mr. Kazmark said that number of vehicles in the Village fleet is required so that all Village departments can run effectively and perform their day-to-day operations without interruption. Each year, an inventory is taken of the Village fleet so that older vehicles are purged, if they are not running effectively, and to determine if new vehicles are required.

Councilmember Winograd indicated to Councilmember Weitz that the ACCESS Committee members would like to be included in the discussions with the Fourth of July Committee next year, regarding accessible handicapped parking spots. She said that one in four Americans will become disabled at some point in their lives. Councilmember Winograd stated that more handicapped parking spaces have been added to the Bus Station lot. She encouraged all residents to let her or any members of the ACCESS Committee know if there is a lack of handicapped parking spaces in any lots in Ridgewood, or if any residents feel that the available handicapped parking spaces could be placed more conveniently for the disabled.

Regarding emergency preparedness, Councilmember Winograd recommended that residents with only a landline phone obtain a cell phone, so that they can be contacted via the reverse 911 system in the event of an emergency. She also recommended that residents register for the reverse 911 system, if they are not already registered. Councilmember Winograd asked individuals to sign up disabled or senior family members who may not yet be registered for the 911 system. Mr. Kazmark added that after the severe thunder and lightning storm which occurred last night, over 175 people signed up for the lightning detection system.

Councilmember Weitz mentioned that one of the main access routes for the handicapped, when attending the Fourth of July fireworks, is from the Graydon South parking lot over the pedestrian bridge, which is owned by Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G). Councilmember Weitz said that the bridge was paved in time for the Fourth of July festivities, as the ground surface had not been suitable previously for access by the handicapped. He said that the improved lighting system at Veterans Field was very helpful when the fireworks concluded, so that visitors could safely exit the field at night.

Ms. Mailander thanked her staff in the Village Clerk's Office, who assist her with not only writing the Proclamations, but also making the necessary arrangements to ensure that the individuals being honored and their families are present at the Village Council meetings. Mayor Vagianos also thanked the staff in the Village Clerk's Office.

Mayor Vagianos stated that one of the first things he considered when elected to the Village Council was downsizing the Village fleet. He toured all departments and noted all of the vehicles used by each department. He stated that he found that a lot of departmental staff have to transport a lot of equipment and supplies in order to perform their job responsibilities, and larger SUVs and trucks are needed for this purpose. Mayor Vagianos said that the Village will continue to review the Village fleet on a regular basis to see, wherever possible, what vehicles can be downsized.

Mayor Vagianos then spoke about how deeply involved Councilmember Winograd has been with the members of the ACCESS Committee ever since she was elected to the Village Council, and how much she has taught him about individuals with disabilities. Mayor Vagianos proudly announced that since installing new lighting on the girls' softball field, as well as the rest of Veterans Field, the 14U girls' softball team recently won a championship.

## **7. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Kazmark echoed Councilmember Weitz's earlier comments and thanked the Fourth of July Committee members, volunteers, and Village staff for their hard work in making the Fourth of July festivities a success. He said that a debriefing will be held in September between the Village and the Fourth of July Committee.

Graydon Pool is now open daily from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., through Labor Day.

Mr. Kazmark reminded all residents of the irrigation restrictions in effect in the Village, which allow watering only two days per week. Residents with even-numbered addresses may water on Wednesday and Sunday, and residents with odd-numbered addresses may water on Tuesday and Saturday. No irrigation is permitted on Monday, Thursday or Friday. He reminded everyone to turn off their sprinklers if it is raining, or to adjust their Smart Controllers if necessary.

The Ridgewood Guild is sponsoring "Music in the Night" on Friday evenings in the Central Business District (CBD) throughout the summer, until Labor Day. "Music in the Park" will take place on Saturday evenings from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square. "Free Movies in the Park," sponsored by the Ridgewood Guild, will be held on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 9:00 p.m. this evening, in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square, and continuing through August 20<sup>th</sup>. The Summer Concert Series has begun at the Kasschau Memorial Shell, on Veterans Field. Visitors should bring a chair or blanket to the concerts. The concerts begin at 8:00 p.m. and end at 10:00 a.m., unless otherwise noted, and are held every Tuesday and Thursday evening during the months of July and August.

The Ridgewood Chamber of Commerce is hosting its Annual Ridgewood Farmers Market on Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Train Station parking lot on the west side.

Upcoming Village Council meetings are broadcast live from the Village Hall Courtroom, on the Village website, and on Channel 34 on FIOS. The next Work Session is scheduled for August 6, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. The next Public Meeting will be held on August 13, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

## **8. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilmember Weitz said that he thought this year's Fourth of July parade was the best he has ever seen in the over 100 years since it has been held in Ridgewood, and the fireworks this year were "just immense." He stated that ticket sales for the fireworks were up 25% over last year, and 2024 ticket sales were up 20% over the previous year. Councilmember Weitz said that the Fourth of July events are completely run on private donations and ticket sales, and he thanked the Fourth of July Committee members, especially the Co-Chairs of the Fourth of July Committee, Tara Masterson and Leigh Gilsenan, for their hard work in organizing these events.

Councilmember Weitz thanked Mr. Kazmark and all Village employees who assisted with the Fourth of July events. He said that he was pleased to see the newly installed lights on at Veterans Field to ensure that all visitors left the field safely, and also that the pedestrian bridge was paved to enable handicapped access. He thanked Mr. Kazmark and the Engineering Department for working closely with PSE&G to pave the pedestrian bridge.

Councilmember Weitz welcomed any suggestions from the public which would improve the Fourth of July events next year. He said that the United States will celebrate its 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026, and the Fourth of July events will be even bigger than ever.

Councilmember Winograd said that she had nothing new to report, since her committees have not met since the last Village Council meeting. She said that the Fields Committee typically does not meet in August, but a meeting will be held this August (the date will be posted on the website) because they have some important issues to discuss.

Councilmember Mortimer indicated that none of his committees have met since the last Village Council meeting. He congratulated Councilmember Weitz and the members of the Fourth of July Committee for a job well done.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she had nothing new to report, since her committees have not met since the last Village Council meeting. She said that the Paramus Planning Board will hold a hearing on July 17, 2025 at 7:00 p.m., regarding an application to subdivide the property located on the corner of East Ridgewood Avenue and Paramus Road. The meeting will be held at 1 Jockish Square in Paramus. This property used to be a nursery and borders the Saddle River, but is located in Paramus. The applicant is asking for approval to subdivide the property into two

lots, maintaining one lot with the existing building and constructing at least 40 housing units on the other lot.

**9.     RESOLUTION – RIDGEWOOD WATER**

Ms. Mailander said that the following resolution, numbered 25-297, would be adopted by a Consent Agenda, with one vote by the Village Council, and would be read by title only.

## **10. ORDINANCES**

### **A. INTRODUCTION - #4050 – WHITE COLLAR SALARY ORDINANCE**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Clerk read Ordinance #4050 by title on first reading. Councilmember Winograd seconded the motion.

#### **Roll Call Vote**

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The Village Clerk read Ordinance #4050 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE TO FIX SALARIES, WAGES AND OTHER  
COMPENSATION OF AND FOR THE WHITE COLLAR EMPLOYEES OF  
THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD, COUNTY OF BERGEN AND STATE OF  
NEW JERSEY

Councilmember Weitz moved that Ordinance #4050 be adopted on first reading and that August 13, 2025 be fixed as the date for the hearing thereon. Councilmember Winograd seconded the motion.

#### **Roll Call Vote**

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

### **B. INTRODUCTION - #4051 – BLUE COLLAR SALARY ORDINANCE**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Clerk read Ordinance #4051 by title on first reading. Deputy Mayor Perron seconded the motion.

#### **Roll Call Vote**

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The Village Clerk read Ordinance #4051 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE TO FIX SALARIES, WAGES AND OTHER  
COMPENSATION OF AND FOR BLUE COLLAR EMPLOYEES OF THE  
VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD, COUNTY OF BERGEN AND STATE OF NEW  
JERSEY

Councilmember Winograd moved that Ordinance #4051 be adopted on first reading and that August 13, 2025 be fixed as the date for the hearing thereon. Deputy Mayor Perron seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

**C. INTRODUCTION - #4052 – AMEND CHAPTER 190 – LAND USE AND  
DEVELOPMENT – ESTABLISH S-1 SENIOR OVERLAY ZONE  
DISTRICT**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Clerk read Ordinance #4052 by title on first reading. Councilmember Mortimer seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

The Village Clerk read Ordinance #4052 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 190, LAND USE AND  
DEVELOPMENT, TO CREATE THE S-1 SENIOR OVERLAY ZONE  
DISTRICT

Councilmember Weitz moved that Ordinance #4052 be adopted on first reading and that August 13, 2025 be fixed as the date for the hearing thereon. Councilmember Mortimer seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

**D. INTRODUCTION - #4053 – ESTABLISH SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (SID) AND DESIGNATE A NON-PROFIT DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (DMC)**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Clerk read Ordinance #4053 by title on first reading. Councilmember Winograd seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote**

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The Village Clerk read Ordinance #4053 by title only:

**AN ORDINANCE CREATING A NEW CHAPTER ENTITLED “SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT” WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD AND DESIGNATING A DISTRICT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**

Before moving to adopt this ordinance, Deputy Mayor Perron stated that the Schedule A attached to Ordinance #4053 this evening lists the properties that the District Management Corporation Board of Directors may consider as being part of the Special Improvement District (SID), but does not dictate which properties will be included. The list on Schedule A will need to be reordered by block number, to make it easier to find an address.

Deputy Mayor Perron moved that Ordinance #4053 be adopted on first reading and that August 13, 2025 be fixed as the date for the hearing thereon. Councilmember Winograd seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote**

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Councilmember Winograd thanked Deputy Mayor Perron, members of the Central Business District Advisory Committee, and the Special Improvement District (SID) Steering Committee for all of their work regarding the formation of a SID in Ridgewood. She explained to the public that the SID will help to maintain vibrancy, cleanliness, and beautification in the Central Business District. Councilmember Winograd also thanked Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney, for his legal advice regarding the SID.

Mayor Vagianos echoed Councilmember Winograd's comments. He emphasized that there will be no cost to the resident taxpayers of Ridgewood for the SID.

**E. PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE #4049 – AMEND CHAPTER 145 – FEES – INCREASE FEES FOR CONNECTION TO SANITARY SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM**

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Clerk read Ordinance #4049 by title on second reading and that the Public Hearing thereon be opened. Councilmember Weitz seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

The Village Clerk read Ordinance #4049 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 145 OF THE CODE OF THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD, FEES, AT SECTION 145-6, "ENUMERATION OF FEES RELATING TO CODE CHAPTERS"

Since there were no public comments, Mayor Vagianos moved that the Public Hearing on Ordinance #4049 be closed. Councilmember Weitz seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

Councilmember Winograd moved that Ordinance #4049 be adopted on second reading and final publication as required by law. Councilmember Weitz seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Vagianos  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None



## **11.    RESOLUTIONS**

Ms. Mailander said that the following resolutions, numbered 25-298 through 25-321 would be adopted by a Consent Agenda, with one vote by the Village Council, and would be read by title only.

## **12. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Boyd A. Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, said that with regard to Resolution #25-303, he noted that the purchase, installation and repair of emergency lights and other equipment on Ridgewood police cars will take place in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. He asked how often police vehicles will have to be driven down to Cherry Hill for service, or if representatives from Winner Ford will travel up to Ridgewood to service police vehicles. Mr. Loving said that having to drive all the way to Cherry Hill is a long distance to drive in order to save a few dollars on a State contract.

Mr. Loving said that, according to Ridgewood Code, all sprinkler systems must be equipped with rain sensors, so residents should not have to turn off their sprinkler systems if it is raining, since the rain sensor will shut the system off after ¼ inch accumulation of rain. Mr. Loving said he was sorry to hear that there were not enough handicapped parking spaces during the Fourth of July fireworks display this year. Mr. Loving expressed the hope that a sensory-friendly area will be created during the parade next year, that is noise- and light-free for sensitive individuals. He acknowledged the fact raised by Mayor Vagianos that it would be difficult to establish such a sensory-free zone because of the crowds that will most certainly gather in the same area.

Mr. Loving said that some nearby municipalities have gotten rid of fireworks on the Fourth of July and replaced them with drone shows, since dogs are very frightened by fireworks noise. He acknowledged that many Ridgewood residents love tradition and do not like change, but he asked if Ridgewood officials could investigate other municipalities which have drone shows rather than fireworks for the Fourth of July.

Anne Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, spoke about the Fourth Round Affordable Housing obligation for Ridgewood being reduced from 427 units to 4 units. She understands that this is a financial “win” for the Village and that Beth McManus, the Village’s Affordable Housing Planner, did everything she was hired to do. However, Ms. Loving stated that the housing plan feels kind of “elitist,” as though the Village were trying to keep “the others” (poor people) out. Ms. Loving felt sad that there is a concerted effort to keep affordable housing out of Ridgewood and other towns.

Cynthia O’Keefe, a resident of Ridgewood, said that the *New York Times* published an article yesterday, written by Rebecca Talbert, entitled “Extreme Heat is Disrupting Athletic Events Worldwide.” The article stated that the risk of competing, and even spectating, in extreme heat is serious. Related illnesses can escalate quickly, from cramps to heat stroke, which can be fatal. Ms. O’Keefe said that the temperature was 86 degrees this evening, and she still noted a lot of games being played on Veterans Field. Ms. O’Keefe asked if Ridgewood officials would be reviewing the heat guidelines/fields policies by which it abides, to see if any revisions need to be made.

Ms. O’Keefe spoke about a field feasibility study conducted by a Ridgewood resident named Carolyn Holt, and she wondered if Ms. Holt would be the person responsible for reviewing the field policies regarding extreme temperatures. Ms. O’Keefe said that many parents expressed concern on social media about their children playing sports on artificial turf on extremely hot days. She said that even though a majority of the Village Councilmembers have expressed their viewpoint that artificial turf is safe for children to play on, they have not expressed any opinion about the effect of artificial turf on the environment. Ms. O’Keefe said that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended that municipalities test weathered or old artificial turf for the presence of lead and other contaminants, and she asked if this recommendation was being followed in Ridgewood.

Ms. O’Keefe said that when Councilmember Mortimer ran for a seat on the Village Council, he said that he wanted Ridgewood to be viewed as a “beacon of environmental soundness,” and she asked Councilmember Mortimer if Ridgewood really intends to be “Green Ridgewood,” despite the fact that Councilmember Mortimer and three other Village Councilmembers are voting in favor of artificial turf. Ms. O’Keefe said that she felt it was grossly negligent to install an artificial turf field with PFAS next to private wells, which are on the perimeter of the Schedler property. While she acknowledges the hours spent by the Village Councilmembers in volunteering their time to the Village, Ms. O’Keefe said that she did not want the Village Councilmembers to make decisions that affect her health and well-being, as well as the health and well-being of her neighbors. She said this is a personal matter to all of the Schedler neighbors, and it is not merely a “disagreement” about the safety of artificial turf.

Denise Lima, a resident of Ridgewood, said that the paving of the pedestrian bridge leading from the Graydon South parking lot to Veterans Field was a good improvement, but it is meaningless if a handicapped person cannot find a place to park. She said that she appreciated the fact that the lack of handicapped parking spaces will be addressed by the Village in the future, especially during the Fourth of July festivities. Ms. Lima said that a few years ago, there were no handicapped parking spaces at the Farmers Market. Although there are currently two handicapped parking spaces available in the parking lot by the Train Station on the west side, she felt that the number of spaces for handicapped accessibility should also be re-evaluated in that lot.

Ms. Lima said that there are 102 vehicles in the Village fleet and, after eliminating all of the emergency vehicles and heavy trucks, there remained almost \$5 million worth of SUVs and light trucks (such as Ford-150s) in the Village fleet. This remainder of the fleet does not include vehicles for the Water Department (26 trucks/SUVs). She wondered why so many vehicles were needed for the Water Department and wondered where they are stored, unless staff are bringing the vehicles home. She asked for further evaluation of the Village’s fleet.

Ms. Lima said that the 30-page guide for emergency preparedness developed by the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is excellent. She feels that every Ridgewood resident should print out the guide contained on the Village website and fill it out for themselves. Ms. Lima said that the guide indicates that in the event of an unexpected disaster, Village officials will communicate to Ridgewood residents where emergency shelters are located. Ms. Lima asked what the evacuation routes will be and where the shelters will be located. She said that although she has signed up for the reverse 911 emergency notification system with her cell phone number and email address, she was never notified that there was a bear wandering about in her area. She never received a lightning notification, although she can hear the alarms from the fields. Ms. Lima receives constant text notifications from Glen Rock, Midland Park, and Allendale, but she rarely gets notifications from Ridgewood. She asked if someone could look into this for her.

Saurabh Dani, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he missed a part of the meeting when the lack of handicapped parking spaces on the Fourth of July was discussed. He said that if the lack of spaces had occurred in the evening, he believes it was due to a lack of enforcement and not due to a lack of available handicapped parking spaces. Mr. Dani said that he was stationed at the pedestrian bridge collecting tickets for the fireworks, and he only noticed one person in a wheelchair coming from the Graydon South parking lot. The parking lot filled up quickly, so Mr. Dani felt that the lack of handicapped parking spaces was due to the fact that the spots were being filled by people who were not handicapped and there was a lack of enforcement. He suggested that perhaps the Village could offer financial assistance in this regard by hiring Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs) to enforce parking regulations in the parking lots near Veterans Field during the Fourth of July fireworks. Since most of the Fourth of July activities are funded through private donations and ticket sales, the Fourth of July Committee will not have the money to hire PEOs for that purpose. Mr. Dani also clarified that the email correspondence he received from Ms. Mailander regarding his inquiry about the PILOT program had been received on Monday morning.

There were no further public comments.

Councilmember Mortimer said that he would message Ms. Lima tomorrow so that she can sign up on the reverse 911 emergency notification system. He said that he received six emergency notifications yesterday.

Addressing Mr. Loving, Councilmember Weitz said that the establishment of a sensory-free area for the Fourth of July parade is already on the agenda for the next meeting of the Fourth of July Committee for discussion, although he acknowledged that it would be difficult to implement such an area.

Councilmember Winograd said that the ACCESS Committee would like to be involved in any discussions involving the sensory-free area for the Fourth of July parade. She emphasized that there

are neurodivergent children who struggle with different issues. A subcommittee of the ACCESS Committee will be formed to specifically deal with the Fourth of July parade. Councilmember Winograd stated that some members of the ACCESS Committee with neurodivergent issues indicated that they want their own float in the parade. She emphasized that there is not just one solution that will service the full ACCESS Committee.

Regarding the reverse 911 emergency notification system, Councilmember Winograd asked if a reminder could be included in the weekly Friday e-notice to remind residents to sign up for the lightning notification system and emergency notifications. She stated that the heat regulations guidelines have been in existence for a while, but the Village just recently published them on the Village website. Councilmember Winograd stated that Carolyn Holt is a member at large of the Fields Committee, to represent the community's interest related to fields, from the school population.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that with climate change "heating up" Village fields more and more, she questioned whether youth athletes will actually get more play time on artificial turf fields, as claimed by artificial turf manufacturers. She wondered whether coaches are really cancelling practices or games on extremely hot days, and inquired if there are any statistics in this regard.

Mr. Kazmark said that the Parks and Recreation Department is monitoring and tracking field use every day, and they are in constant communication with the Village Manager's Office during heatwaves. The regulations promulgated by the NJSIAA were redistributed to every sports organization that has a permit to use both Village-owned and Board of Education-owned fields. In addition, the Master Library will let Village officials know which fields are being used on any given day and time.

Councilmember Winograd reminded Deputy Mayor Perron how much playing time was lost due to flooding of the grass fields this past spring, when girls' flag football games had to be cancelled due to flooded fields. It was her opinion that rain causes more cancellations to occur than heatwaves. Councilmember Winograd added that artificial turf can be plowed, allowing for more play time during the winter.

Mr. Kazmark added that the decision regarding field use during a heatwave is very situational, when compared to a rainstorm. Air temperatures, humidity, playing surface conditions, and time of day all need to be factored into a decision as to whether or not a field is playable. He described various scenarios during which athletic fields may or may not be playable, as well as the strict protocols that are in place during warmer temperatures. He stated that he visited Maple Field on Monday when the temperature was 83 degrees, and he observed the summer camp counselors and attendees as they played on Maple Field. He observed the camp counselors insist that the children drink water after every 15 minutes of play.

Mr. Kazmark reminded everyone that the Village also has Green Acres obligations. He said that if a field is not being used for an organized event, and four or five children decide to play a game of touch football on Maple Field, the Village has no authority to tell those children not to play on Maple Field. With the acceptance of Green Acres grants, any land developed with those funds are public lands, except in the event of flooding.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked if coaches in Ridgewood are using the device specifically used to determine the WetBulb Global Temperature (WBGT). Councilmember Winograd replied that the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department measures the WBGT and field use is controlled by Master Library. All sports organizations know that Nancy Bigos, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, will shut down a field if it is too hot. Mr. Kazmark added that David Wilde in the Recreation Department monitors the WBGT every day.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that the Village takes its affordable housing obligations and planning very seriously, and that is why Beth McManus, the Village's Affordable Housing Planner, was hired. Ms. McManus has devoted her career to, and believes deeply in, affordable housing. Deputy Mayor Perron said that the Village is not engaging in the affordable housing program for the purpose of keeping people of any particular economic stratus out of the Village. She said that diversity is beneficial to all Ridgewood residents, and there is no exclusionary intent of the Village whatsoever.

Mayor Vagianos agreed with the statements made by Deputy Mayor Perron, and stated that there is hardly any vacant developable land left in Ridgewood. If someone desires to build a new house, an existing house would have to be knocked down in order to accommodate the new one. He said that the Village has established several overlay zones in the Village, such as the new S-1 Senior Overlay Zone District voted upon this evening. There is an overlay zone established for the Valley Hospital property on North Van Dien Avenue, which sets forth the number of regular and affordable housing units that can be constructed on that site, if Valley Hospital decides to vacate the property. However, if Valley Hospital does not vacate the property, there will not be any development opportunity for the Village on that site.

Mr. Kazmark corroborated Deputy Mayor Perron's comments and stated that he does not believe there is any intention of Village officials to exclude future affordable housing in Ridgewood. He stated that this position has been politicized and weaponized throughout the State of New Jersey by other communities in New Jersey. Mr. Kazmark said that Ms. McManus has scrutinized what the Village's realistic development potential is and has acted accordingly. He said that Ridgewood is a very "built out" community, and he has spent countless hours with others trying to figure out what possible sites could be developed for affordable housing. Those targeted areas were included in the Fourth Round Housing Plan that was submitted to the Department of Community Development at the end of June 2025.

Mr. Rogers added that there is a lot of oversight regarding the Village's Fair Share Housing Plan, not only by the court, but also by a State advocate with the Fair Share Housing Center who reviews the Village's submitted plan. This oversight ensures that the Village provides a "realistic opportunity" for development of affordable housing. Mr. Rogers added that developers are always "breathing down the Village's neck" as well, and this was corroborated by Mayor Vagianos, who spoke about "builder's remedy." A "builder's remedy" occurs if a developer feels that the Village is trying to keep them out of the Village, and then the developer can sue the Village in order to develop the property in the way that they want to do so.

Addressing Mr. Loving's question about the contract with Winner Ford, Mr. Kazmark stated that the police vehicles are driven to Cherry Hill when they need repair or when installation of equipment is needed. He understands Mr. Loving's remarks regarding the distance that has to be traveled to accomplish these repairs, but this contract was awarded under State contract. Mr. Kazmark said that he has argued in the past at League of Municipalities meetings that the State should at least award one contract for Northern New Jersey and another contract for Southern New Jersey, instead of only one contract for the entire state. However, if the police vehicles are not taken to the Cherry Hill location for service, then the contract for these services would have to go out for bid, which would most likely result in an increase in the contract price.

Addressing Ms. Lima's inquiries, Mr. Kazmark stated that last year, the Village filed an Office of Emergency Management Plan with Bergen County that is sent to the New Jersey State Police. The full context of this plan is not published on the Village website for security reasons and also because every emergency presents a different situation. Mr. Kazmark said that some emergency locations may not be accessible during a particular emergency, resulting in the need for alternate locations to be announced by Village officials. He urged all Ridgewood residents to sign up for text alerts, email alerts, and the reverse 911 system.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Councilmember Weitz, seconded by Councilmember Mortimer, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council's Regular Public Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

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Paul Vagianos  
Mayor

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Heather A. Mailander  
Village Clerk