

MINUTES

Mayor and Council Regular Meeting

May 22, 2025

7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER –

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge was held in person at the River Edge Public Library located at 685 Elm Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661 and virtually via Zoom on May 22, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Mayor Thomas Papaleo.

SILENT PRAYER – FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Papaleo asked for a moment of silence for all people who are suffering from terrorist attacks as well as all people who are starving and hungry. Council President Montisano-Koen then led those present in a salute to the flag.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE -

Mayor Papaleo read the Statement of Compliance into the record as follows:

Statement of Compliance with Open Public Meeting Act: This meeting complies with the Open Public Meeting Act by notification on January 6, 2025 of this location, date and time to the Town News and the Record and by posting of same on the municipal bulletin board and Borough Web Site and filing a notice of the same with the Municipal Clerk.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Council President Montisano-Koen, Councilwoman Kaufman, Councilwoman Kinsella, Councilwoman Malellari, Councilman Benson, Councilman Glass, Councilwoman Dhariwal and Mayor Papaleo.

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Administrator Lissette Aportela
Borough Attorney John Shahdanian, Esq.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

On a motion by Councilman Benson, seconded by Council President Montisano-Koen, with Councilman Glass abstaining and all other members present voting in favor, that the Minutes of the Mayor and Council Regular Meeting of April 10, 2025 and Mayor and Council Closed Session of April 24, 2025 are hereby approved.

PRESENTATION –

Borough Hall Entrance Bid Results

Robert Costa and Jeyson Flores of Costa Engineering were present for this discussion. Borough Engineer Costa advised that La Salle was, once again, the lowest bidder. He noted that there was an increase of approximately \$88,000 from the original bid submission. He cautioned that, although the Borough does have the option to reject and then negotiate with the two bidders, there is a risk

that the number will not be favorable to the Borough.

The possibility of building an aesthetically pleasing ramp as a way to save costs while meeting ADA requirements was discussed. It was noted that, while the Borough has 60 days to award or reject this bid which would allow a rendering of the ramp to be prepared, doing so will delay the issuance of the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO.) It was noted that there is a \$48,000 allowance for unforeseen circumstances and the Borough Engineer expressed confidence that there will not be any Change Orders.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the governing body to move forward with awarding the project. The various alternates were discussed and it was agreed that the base bid, alternates associated with the three additional parking spaces, and the alternate for radiant heating would be awarded.

Councilman Glass raised concerns with choosing concrete over pavers and noted that \$60,000 is not the incremental cost.

Borough Administrator Aportela advised that there will be additional maintenance if pavers are chosen. She noted that the DPW is not able to maintain the current pavers which are being uprooted by trees, advising that there is already documentation of people tripping and falling. As the DPW does not have the staff to maintain pavers, she advised that the cost for outsourcing would need to be included in the operating budget year after year.

A consensus was not reached as to whether to choose concrete or pavers. Borough Administrator Aportela is to request Jason Milito, DPW Superintendent, to comment on the cost to maintain pavers as well as the cost to outsource. Borough Engineer Costa was requested to work with the Police Chief and Borough Administrator to ensure that there is access to the building during construction.

The meeting recessed at 8:17 p.m. and resumed at 8:22 p.m.

KBG Fields/Pickleball Court Design

Joseph Ricca, Recreation Director, explained the sources of funding as well as the reasons for the improvements that are being undertaken at KBG. He reviewed the design and noted that the Risk Manager confirmed that turf can be placed in the floodplain which will keep the field playable as well as assist the DPW with maintenance. He advised that the Recreation Committee is in agreement with the proposed design.

There was discussion regarding potential damage to the turf due to flooding. Recreation Director Ricca advised that there would be insurance coverage to repair any damages, and if necessary, the insurance funds can be used to return this area to clay. The number of organizations that use this field were noted as well as the fact that there is no other location for a field within the Borough.

It was the consensus of the governing body to authorize the Borough Engineer to finalize the design to allow this project to go out to bid and the bid opening to be scheduled.

Council Chamber Dais

On behalf of the DPW Superintendent, Borough Administrator Aportela explained that a conceptual plan was presented a few months ago to reconstruct the dais in Council Chambers to allow more seating. She advised that, should the design be approved, the next step would be to have the IT Consultant provide a quote to install microphones.

Borough Administrator Aportela is to inquire as to the reason for the swing gate. It was agreed that it be removed unless there is a specific reason that it is needed. She is also to confirm whether there will be a warranty. It was the consensus to move forward once those two items are addressed.

Councilman Glass left the meeting at 8:59 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS –

On a motion by Councilwoman Kinsella, seconded by Councilman Benson, and all present voting in favor, to open for public comments on any item on the agenda.

Carolyn Smythe, 333 Lexington Drive, explained that her mother is disappointed with the location of the veteran flag placed in honor of her father and expressed her hope that the flag can be relocated to a more central location.

Tracy Levine, 535 Bogert Road, inquired as to the materials that are being used for the pickleball court surface as well as how many courts are being proposed.

Michael Rosoff, 163 Dorchester Road, asked that the current pickleball courts be kept at Continental even after the KBG courts are complete. He noted that the number of pickleball participants far exceeds the number of people who play tennis and requested that this group be given equal recognition in the community.

On a motion by Council President Montisano-Koen, seconded by Councilwoman Kinsella, and all present voting in favor, to close public comments on any item on the agenda.

Mayor Papaleo expressed his belief that, with the exception of the flag for Joe Maugeri, all flags were randomly placed. He suggested that Ms. Smythe reach out to the DPW Superintendent to see if the flag can be moved.

Borough Administrator Aportela added that the flags will be moved to a different location each year.

The materials for the court surface and number of courts were advised. It was noted that, although the current courts were always intended to be temporary, should there be a decrease in tennis participants and an increase in pickleball, this decision may be reconsidered.

APPOINTMENTS & PERSONNEL CHANGES –

On a motion by Council President Montisano-Koen, seconded by Councilwoman Dhariwal, with Councilwoman Kinsella and Councilwoman Malellari recusing from the hiring of camp staff and all other members present voting in favor, to approve the following appointments and personnel changes:

Approve the appointment of Isabella Gilmour; Joanne Aran as Resident Members for two-year terms to the Green Team effective May 22, 2025.

Approve the hire of **Camp Staff** from June 23, 2025 through July 25, 2025 as per the list on file with the Borough Clerk's office.

MONTHLY REPORTS –

Mayor Papaleo advised that the following reports are on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk and available for review:

- Historic Commission - April 22, 2025
- Library Board of Trustees - May 6, 2025
- Land Use Board - April 6, 2025

RESOLUTIONS - By Consent

- a. **#25-152** Amend Contract – Architectural Services – Borough Hall Addition and Renovation – Arcari & Iovino Architects, PC
- b. **#25-153** Approve Refunds – Recreation Department
- c. **#25-154** Resolution Permitting the Possession and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages at a Block Party on Wayne Avenue
- d. **#25-155** Approve the Hire of a Police Dispatcher
- e. **#25-156** 2025 Salary Resolution
- f. **#25-157** Establish Summer Hours for 2025

Motion by Councilwoman Malellari, second by Councilman Benson, that the Consent Agenda be approved.

Council President Montisano-Koen requested an explanation of Resolution #25-152 and #25-156.

Borough Administrator explained that, although the physical construction at Borough Hall is complete, the project is still being closed out. As these outstanding matters involve the architect, she noted that there is a need to extend the contract. She provided the reasons that Resolution #25-156 is necessary.

The vote was recorded as follows:

Council President Montisano-Koen:	aye	Councilman Benson:	aye
Councilwoman Kinsella:	aye	Councilman Glass:	absent
Councilwoman Malellari:	aye	Councilwoman Dhariwal:	aye*

Councilwoman Dhariwal abstained from Resolution #25-153.

#25-158 Payment of Bills

Councilwoman Kinsella read resolution #25-158 into the record:

At a Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, held on May 22, 2025.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge approve the following expenditures.

CURRENT FUND	\$	2,170,835.04
GENERAL CAPITAL FUND	\$	46,047.71
GRANT FUND	\$	2,460.00

ANIMAL CONTROL	\$	21.00
TRUST OTHER	\$	32,701.58
PAYROLL	\$	21,562.96
RECREATION TRUST	\$	15,282.90

Motion by Councilwoman Kinsella, second by Councilwoman Malellari, that Resolution #25-158 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Council President Montisano-Koen:	aye	Councilman Benson:	aye
Councilwoman Kinsella:	aye	Councilman Glass:	absent
Councilwoman Malellari:	aye	Councilwoman Dhariwal:	aye*

Councilwoman Dhariwal abstained from check #66293, #66294, #66317, #66320, #66330, #66331, #66338, #66343, #66355, #66367, #66368, #66369, #2965 through #2968, and #6034 through #6041.

NEW BUSINESS –

Proposed Ordinance to Amend Zoning Regulations

Borough Administrator Aportela explained that the Land Use Board has recommended that this proposed Ordinance to amend the Borough’s zoning regulations regarding swimming pools and building coverage, among other minor changes, be adopted in order to comply with the Borough’s most recent master plan reexamination report. She noted that the draft ordinance was reviewed by the Borough Attorney who made some minor changes.

Borough Attorney Shahdanian recommended that this ordinance be adopted.

It was the consensus of the governing body to list this ordinance on the next agenda for introduction.

OLD BUSINESS –

There was no Old Business.

COUNCIL COMMENTS –

Councilman Benson recognized Chief Walker and Sgt. Diamond, explaining that an unannounced safety audit of the school crossing guard posts was conducted by PEOSH and no issues or corrective action was identified.

Mayor Papaleo congratulated the River Edge Fire Department on its 125th anniversary as well as former Fire Chief Gregg Cariddi on his retirement. He thanked the Oradell and New Milford Fire Chiefs for attending the event in recognition of this anniversary. He announced that there will be a private Memorial Day ceremony held at the firehouse an hour prior to the public ceremony which will be held at 11 a.m. He encouraged the governing body to attend.

ADJOURNMENT –

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Council President Montisano-Koen, second by Councilman Benson, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Dodd, RMC
Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-152

Amend Contract – Architectural Services –
Borough Hall Addition and Renovation –
Arcari & Iovino Architects, PC

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council awarded a professional services to Arcari & Iovino Architects, PC, for the Borough Hall Addition and Renovation Project via Resolution #22-230 on August 1, 2022; and;

WHEREAS, the professional services contract had been amended on February 27, 2023, via Resolution #23-91 for additional improvements involving Wing B and the entrance walkway; and

WHEREAS, the professional services contract had been amended on February 15, 2024, via Resolution #24-84 for additional improvements involving the relocation of the elevator machine room; and

WHEREAS, the professional services contract had been amended on May 13, 2024, via Resolution #24-164 and on July 8, 2024, via Resolution #24-223, for additional site visits and for modifications to Council Chambers and the Finance Department; and

WHEREAS, the Contract Administration services for the original construction contract term ended on June 16, 2024, and said services were extended through August 16, 2024, without additional cost; and

WHEREAS, based on the estimated project schedule at the time, the extension of Contract Administration Services was extended on August 12, 2024, via Resolution #24-261 and on January 6, 2025, via Resolution #24-357; and

WHEREAS, additional professional services are required for the mediation process concerning the Borough Hall Addition and Renovation project in the total amount of \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, a completed Business Entity Disclosure Certification and Political Contribution Disclosure Form are on file in the Borough Clerk's Office; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available and said certification is attached to the original of this resolution.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, that the professional services contract awarded to Arcari & Iovino Architects, PC, having its principal office at One Katherine Street in Little Ferry, NJ 07643 for architectural services for the Borough Hall Addition and Renovation Project be hereby amended for total fee not to exceed \$25,000; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in accordance with NJSA 40A:11-5 (1)(a)(i) the Borough Clerk shall publish a notice of award of this professional services contract stating the nature, duration, service and amount of the contract, and that the resolution and contract are on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the Borough Clerk in the Record.

May 22, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella			X			
Malellari	X		X			
Benson		X	X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal			X			
Mayor Papaleo						

I hereby certify that this resolution, consisting of 2 page(s), was adopted at a meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, held on this 22nd day of May, 2025.



Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk

Certification of Availability of Funds
NJAC 5:30-5

Date: May 8, 2025

For Resolution #R25-152

To: Mayor and Council

I hereby certify to the availability of public funds for the following specific purpose:

Purpose: Amend professional services contract for architectural services for the mediation process concerning the Borough Hall Addition and Renovation project for a total fee not to exceed \$25,000.

Line Item (or Ordinance) to be Charged:

C-04-24-023-100



Chris Battaglia, CFO

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-153

Approve Refunds – Recreation Department

WHEREAS, participants of various programs offered by the River Edge Recreation Department have requested a refund; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Administrator, Lissette Aportela, has reviewed the requests and recommended them for Mayor and Council approval.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen, that the refunds listed below are hereby approved; and

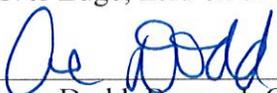
RESIDENT	ADDRESS	PROGRAM	AMOUNT	ACCOUNT #
Vanessa Sollecito	129 Howland Ave River Edge NJ 07661	2025 Summer Playground Camp	\$373.00	T-18-55-286-003
Danny Suk	207 Adams Ave River Edge, NJ 07661	Youth Chess Class	\$25.00	T-18-55-286-023

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Finance Department and Department of Recreation and Cultural Affairs.

May 22, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella			X			
Malellari	X		X			
Benson		X	X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal					X	
Mayor Papaleo						

I hereby certify that this resolution, consisting of 1 page(s), was adopted at a meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, held on this 22nd day of May, 2025.



 Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-154

Resolution Permitting the Possession and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages at a Block Party on Wayne Avenue

WHEREAS, on or about May 22, 2025, the Borough of River Edge granted permission to John Ortiz, 441 Bogert Road, River Edge, New Jersey, to hold a block party on Wayne Avenue between Bogert Road and Mercer Avenue on Saturday, July 19th from 10:00 to 6:00 p.m. (rain date Sunday, July 20th) in accordance with Borough Ordinance #1678; and

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

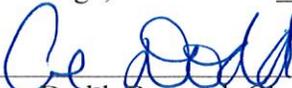
WHEREAS, Borough Code Section 114-15 allows the Governing Body to permit the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages in or on a public street or sidewalk in connection with an authorized block party.

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

May 22, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella			X			
Malellari	X		X			
Benson		X	X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal			X			
Mayor Papaleo						

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Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-155

Approve the Hire of a Police Dispatcher

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge that Andrew Capuano is hereby hired as Police Dispatcher for the Police Department at an hourly rate of \$24.96 with a six (6) month probationary period, effective May 19, 2025.

May 22, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella			X			
Malellari	X		X			
Benson		X	X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal			X			
Mayor Papaleo						

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Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-156

2025 Salary Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED that the following officers and employees of the Borough of River Edge be compensated for the year 2025 in accordance with Ordinance #25-1 effective January 1, 2025 with the following base pay:

<u>EMPLOYEE</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>2025 SALARY</u>	<u>2025 HOURLY</u>
<u>CONSTRUCTION/CODE ENFORCEMENT</u>			
SHNAPER, NICOLE L.	ZONING ASSISTANT (EFF. 05/16/25)	\$78,679.70	
<u>DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS</u>			
NEHER, GEORGE	PART-TIME		\$26.80
OLOHAN, PETER	PART-TIME		\$26.80
<u>POLICE DEPARTMENT</u>			
SLEO III	EFFECTIVE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR		\$39.14

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any formal action by a governing body approving or disapproving a measure establishing or modifying the salaries, benefits, or other compensation of its employees shall occur no earlier than the tenth calendar day immediately following the meeting at which the measure was introduced and discussed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the actions of the Chief Financial Officer, Accounts Supervisor and Payroll Clerk to pay these salaries and wages effective January 1, 2025 is hereby ratified.

May 22, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella			X			
Malellari	X		X			
Benson		X	X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal			X			
Mayor Papaleo						

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 Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-157

Establish Summer Hours for 2025

WHEREAS, Resolution #25-40, adopted on January 6, 2025, established the work hours for non-contractual full-time permanent employees (Administrative Department) for the year as 35 hours a week from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday; and

WHEREAS, as per the Borough's Personnel Manual, the established summer hours for non-contractual full-time permanent employees during the months of July and August permit a schedule from 8:00AM to 3:00PM on Fridays, provided that said employees work through their lunch period; and

WHEREAS, after review with Labor Counsel, the Personnel Committee has recommended establishing the following summer hours for the months of June, July, and August for non-contractual, full-time permanent employees, which will still result in a 35-hour work week:

- Monday through Thursday – 7:30AM to 4:00PM
- Friday – 7:30AM to 12:30PM, provided that said employees work through their lunch period; and

WHEREAS, all other Borough employees shall be guided by applicable contractual agreements.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Mayor and Council hereby approve the Personnel Committee's recommended summer hours effective Monday, June 2, 2025, through Friday, August 29, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the summer working hour schedule shall not be constructed to change the regular daily schedule (8:00 AM to 4:00 PM) during other months of the year. Summer working hours are a benefit to be used for the convenience of the qualified employee and shall not be withheld arbitrarily; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the summer working hours schedule is wholly subject, suspended or eliminated based on the needs, operation or work environment of the department.

May 22, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella			X			
Malellari	X		X			
Benson		X	X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal			X			
Mayor Papaleo						

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Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
RESOLUTION #25-158

Payment of Bills

At a Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, held on May 22, 2025.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of River Edge approve the following expenditures.

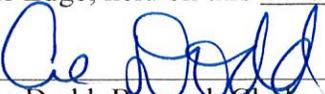
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GRANT FUND	\$	2,460.00
ANIMAL CONTROL	\$	21.00
TRUST OTHER	\$	32,701.58
PAYROLL	\$	21,562.96
RECREATION TRUST	\$	15,282.90

May 8, 2025

	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Montisano-Koen			X			
Kinsella	X		X			
Malellari		X	X			
Benson			X			
Glass			X			X
Dhariwal			X*			
Mayor Papaleo						

*Councilwoman Dhariwal abstained from check # 66293, #66294, #66317, #66320, #66330, #66331, #66338, #66343, #66355, #66367, #66368, #66369, #2965 through #2968, and #6034 through #6041.

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Anne Dodd, Borough Clerk