

**Borough of Garwood**  
**MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**  
**January 13, 2022**

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Moment of Silence

Salute to the Flag

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Union County Hawk advertised on December 2, 2021. Notification was sent to the Star Ledger, and is posted on the Municipal website, the Municipal public bulletin board, and filed in the office of the Municipal Clerk informing the public of the time and place according to the Provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>Mayor Todisco</b>	<b>P</b>		
<b>Councilman Graham</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Councilwoman Loffredo</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Councilman Kearney</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Councilwoman Salmon</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>Councilman Lazarow</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Council President Blumenstock</b>	<b>P</b>

**Also Present:**

Kyle Harris, Borough Administrator  
Adam Abramson, Borough Attorney  
Catherine D. Cameron, Borough Clerk  
James Wright, Chief of Police  
Ralph Bernardo, Recreation Director

**Report of Borough Attorney**

Mr. Abramson provided an overview of the duties and responsibilities assigned to in the positions of Borough Attorney and Labor Counsel.

**Report of Borough Administrator**

Borough Hall will be closed on Monday January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 for the Martin Luther King Jr Holiday. Borough Hall will be open until 4:30PM on Friday January 14<sup>th</sup> and will reopen Tuesday January 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM. Please be advised there will be regular south side garbage collection on January 17<sup>th</sup>

The 2022 DPW Schedule and Guide to Municipal Services was mailed earlier this week. Most residents should have received this in their mailbox. I just want to point out, that there will be Grass Clipping Collection every Wednesday from the first Wednesday in April through the last Wednesday in October.

Over the next three months, we will be having presentations from various department heads to provide an overview of their departments operations. These presentations are intended to provide the council and the public with a better understanding of the various departments in Garwood.

- a) January 27<sup>th</sup>- Mike Disko, Borough Engineer and Jennifer Sherman, Tax Assessor
- b) February 10<sup>th</sup> Chief Wright Police Department
- c) February 24<sup>th</sup> Chief Scalzadonna Fire Department
- d) March 10<sup>th</sup> Superintendent Dickson Public Works
- e) March 24<sup>th</sup> Kathleen Wierzbinski Senior Services and Ralph Benardo Recreation
- f) April 7<sup>th</sup> Borough Hall- Finance, Tax Collection and Clerks Office

### **Report of Mayor Sara Todisco**

At my request, a post-Hurricane Ida report was prepared so we could get a better understanding of the timeline of what happened, what our local emergency response was, and most importantly, what we can do to improve our response in future major weather emergencies like this one. In the process leading up to this report, our group of department heads, OEM Director, Council President Blumenstock, and myself have met multiple times to discuss what happened and what we could do to improve. Additionally, there have been numerous conversations between departments and our Borough Administrator. At this point, I have received and reviewed the Hurricane Ida incident report prepared by our Police Chief, which I would like to give an overview of tonight. It was distributed to the Council earlier today and it will be posted on the Borough website tomorrow morning.

I encourage everyone to read the report in full, but I am going to give some of the major points and recommendations tonight. As I've spoken about before, we were fortunate to have many volunteers in our Fire Department in town for a meeting the night of the storm, so many were able to help with water rescues, pump outs, and more during and after the storm. Due to the conflicting weather reports that Chief Wright detailed in depth, our Police Department was staffed regularly with 3 officers and 1 dispatcher. A recommendation of this report is to add personnel, at overtime if needed, when ample notice is given for future storms of this magnitude. Another recommendation is to add manpower to support the communications desk. This could be at overtime or with the help of volunteers from the Fire Department or Office of Emergency Management pre-selected civilian volunteers. Shortly after Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the Police Department obtained two Humvees. They were not in working order during Hurricane Ida. Therefore, a recommendation is to allocate about \$5,000 each to upgrade these vehicles for high water rescue response. The Humvees should also be relocated to higher ground before major weather events are expected.

The pumps for the underpass failed during Hurricane Ida because they could not handle the magnitude of water. It was not initially a mechanical failure, but rather the discharged water from the pumps had nowhere to go and returned to the underpass. This cycle continued until the water exceeded the pump electronic level, which caused the ultimate failure. A recommendation is to replace the pumps with submersible pumps and install gates to close the underpass during flooding. In the interim, Garwood should explore an agreement with a company to rent pumps and have them readily available to pump out water. We were fortunate to have been able to rent large pumps the day after this storm, but we cannot always count on that in the future.

A final major recommendation of the incident report is for the creation of a water rescue team within the Garwood Fire Department with proper training and equipment for water rescues as well as the conversion of the Police Department's 5 ton military surplus command center truck into a high water rescue vehicle.

Now, the most important thing is for us to decide what to do with the recommendations of the Hurricane Ida Incident Report. It is essentially meaningless without action. Some of our action steps are relatively easy and can be done internally to improve logistics and communication. Others will need funding--some less expensive and some more expensive. I encourage everyone to review the report. Also, I would like the Finance Committee to take the lead when it comes to any potential funding decisions.

Last night was the first meeting of the Planning Board for this year. I want to congratulate Steve Greet for being named Chair and Kathy Villaggio for being named Vice Chair. They both received unanimous support of the Board. As I said last night, I welcome Councilwoman Salmon to her position as Class III member and thank Councilman Graham for serving in this capacity last year. I also welcomed back returning members--Ken Capobianco, Bill Nierstedt, and Rich McCormack. The Board Attorney Don Fraser, Board Planner/Engineer Victor Vinegra, and Board Secretary Adele Lewis all received unanimous support for their professional positions with the Planning Board and I welcome them back as well. There was one

application before the Zoning Board, meaning Councilwoman Salmon and myself could not participate on it, seeking an expansion of a nonconforming 3-family residence at 113-115 Winslow Place. It was not heard last night and instead will be carried to the February meeting. The next meeting of the Planning Board will be January 26th and that will be the continuation of the Paperboard application.

Next, I wanted to briefly speak about Resolution 22-038 on tonight's Consent Agenda and ask for the Council's support. As everyone knows, Garwood has been a member of the Mayors Council for the Rahway River Watershed Flood Control group for a long time. The group is asking each town to contribute some funds to help hire local professionals to help us get a real solution to the flooding issue in our area. Garwood was asked to contribute the least at a cost of \$1000. Up until this point, the Mayors Council has been working with a Washington lobbying firm and we are looking to shift to a more local approach.

Lastly, I urge the Council to support Resolution 22-039 on tonight's Consent Agenda, which has been supported and encouraged by the League of Municipalities. It basically makes Garwood a party to a class action lawsuit against pharmaceutical companies for their role in contributing to the opioid crisis. Funds distributed by this lawsuit will go to opioid addiction prevention efforts and programs.

Mayor Todisco requested consensus from Council regarding a date change for the April 28<sup>th</sup> regular Council meeting due to the Garwood Education Foundation dinner scheduled for the same date.

Discussion ensued.

All Council Members agreed to move the April 28<sup>th</sup> regular Council meeting to Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. in Council Chambers.

Mayor Todisco requested Mr. Harris to circulate the selected architectural RFP's to the Council Members.

**Comments from the Council:**

Councilman Graham NO REPORT

Councilman Graham commended Congressman Malinowski for his support of the Rahway River Watershed Flood Control Council.

Councilman Kearney NO REPORT

Councilman Lazarow NO REPORT

Councilwoman Loffredo NO REPORT

Good Evening ! I will be giving an extensive buildings and grounds reports later in the evening. Thank you!

Councilwoman Salmon NO REPORT

Council President Blumenstock NO REPORT

Council President Blumenstock reminded all in attendance of the contactless activities coordinated for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service scheduled for January 17<sup>th</sup>.

Council President Blumenstock requested additional discussion regarding the next steps following the review committee's selection of an architectural firm for the DPW building project.

Council President Blumenstock inquired with the Borough attorney whether Green Acres would be affected/restricted with regard to rental fee increases.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Abramson stated he will investigate further and provide clarification regarding the matter.

### **MINUTES:**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council held on December 22, 2021.

Executive Session of the Mayor and Council held on December 22, 2021.

A motion was made by Councilman Lazarow, second by Council President Blumenstock, to accept minutes as presented.

All in favor.

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

#### **1) NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES –**

- a) 12/23/2021, Trenton/Lame Duck Update  
<https://www.njlm.org/CivicSend/ViewMessage/Message/160524>
- b) 12/28/2021, Show Off Your City, Send in Your News  
<https://www.njlm.org/CivicSend/ViewMessage/Message/160669>
- c) 1/07/2022, Deadline Extended for Local Government in National Opioid Settlement  
<https://www.njlm.org/CivicSend/ViewMessage/Message/161378>

#### **2) RAHWAY VALLEY SEWERAGE AUTHORITY**

- a) 11/10/2021 RE: Minutes  
[https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/RVSA\\_Approved\\_Minutes\(1\).pdf](https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/RVSA_Approved_Minutes(1).pdf)

### **COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OTHER REPORTS:**

#### **FINANCE AND PERSONNEL: Councilman Lazarow, Chair**

The finance committee will be holding meetings with departments next Wednesday-Friday as we begin the budget process for the 2022 fiscal year.

#### **FIRE AND OEM: Councilman Kearney, Chair**

I want to begin my first report by thanking you, Mayor, for this assignment. I am honored to be selected as Garwood's new Fire Commissioner and promise the Council, the members and the officers of the Garwood Fire Department that I will bring the same advocacy and attention to detail to this assignment as I did to Buildings and Grounds last year.

I've spoken with outgoing Commissioner Graham this week to get the rundown. I believe this was mentioned in one of last year's reports, but the Department was able to secure a grant to purchase a washer and dryer so they can clean their turnout gear on site instead of having to transport it. Additionally, the Borough's grant writing service has been engaged to apply for a FEMA grant which may be used to purchase new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (known as "SCBAs"), and turnout gear for the firefighters, both of which the Department needs to replace expiring items. The Fire Department is also actively seeking additional grant opportunities to help defray expenses. As the incoming Commissioner and also a new member of the Finance Committee, I really appreciate the diligence of our volunteers not only for their diligent response rates to calls for service and training, but for going the further step of attempting to get grant funding for themselves over and above what's provided by our budget. Grant applications are rarely an easy process, so I want to ensure the rest of the Council and the entire Borough is aware of these efforts as we will soon enter budget season.

I will be following up with the Fire Chief on several issues next week, including a tour of the building and apparatus, a review of all current equipment and prioritization of funding requests for this year's budget where

possible. We will also follow up on the Ordinance which was requested last year to address firefighter residency, the junior firefighter program and the Department's chain of command in the hopes of presenting something to the Council for first reading soon.

**FACILITIES, GROUNDS AND SHADE TREES: Councilwoman Loffredo, Chair**

In a under a week since our swearing in, I was able to set up our first meet and greet with borough administrator, Kyle Harris, DPW Superintendent Clint Dickson, Chief Wright and Chief Scalzadonna. I want to thank Kyle for being instrumental in setting up of this first meeting and I also want to thank Councilman Kearny for his extremely detailed punch list that he passed off to me. I reviewed the list with the Department Heads yesterday and we discussed a few additions as well.

Currently the most pressing issues include:

- Upgraded Door Access Control System for the Garwood Police Station, Borough Hall and Garwood Rec Center

- Security Camera and Recording System at the Rec Center

- Cameras at Hartman Park

- Upgraded Phone Systems in all Municipal Buildings – Moving from a Pots System to a VOIP System

All of which have current proposals out for review other then the phone systems which we will be working on. In addition, after meeting with the department heads, they all asked me to add to our punch list – a series of rusting and damaged doors/leaking windows and chalking needs throughout Boro Hall, DPW and Fire Station.

Kyle is working on proposals for these repairs.

There was also a discussion on the need for Hardwired Smoke and CO2 detectors in all of our municipal buildings. Mr. Harris was planning to reach out to Len Spina, the Boroughs Fire Official to find out if current system is up to code so that we can prioritize this project if needed.

As we begin to prepare the 2022 budget in the finance committee, (which I am also on that committee), the department heads will submit their needs and we can discuss this and all of the above and prioritize repairs in a fiscally responsible manner

There are other minor projects that are already in work and will be worked on in future months.

The Garwood Clock is still in the process of getting fixed. We just received an update that parts are behind schedule due to current supply chain issues.

Finally, and one of the most popular topics in Garwood, our DPW Building.

We have received proposals from numerous architectural firms. The review committee members Myself, Councilman Lazarow and Council President Blumenstock, along with Administrator Harris and Superintendent Dickson met on Monday to narrow down the list of architecture proposals. We unanimously agreed on 3 firms based on price, construction of similar projects and overall proposal. Next week, the 3 firms will be reviewing their proposals with us and provide us for an opportunity to ask questions. We hope to have a recommendation to the full council for by the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

That's all I have tonight! Thank you!

**STREETS, ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY: Council President Blumenstock, Chair**

In addition to regular garbage pickup, the DPW removed the holiday decorations from the Municipal Complex and the Council Chambers well as utilizing Fanwood's bucket truck to remove the holiday decorations from the utility poles along South Avenue They also began the annual residential Christmas tree pickup program. The trees are being disposed of at the Fanwood Recycling Center.

Snow removal operations so far this month are as follows: Public Works employees worked a total of 24 man hours of overtime and a total of 48 man hours of regular time on January 7<sup>th</sup> to perform the following during the winter snow event:

- Street and sidewalk de-icing (before and after the event).
- Snow removal on all Borough owned sidewalks and parking lots.
- Snow removal on all Borough Streets.

Once snow removal operations were completed, the Department performed normal residential garbage pickup in the afternoon. The department also performed salting operations as needed on Borough owned sidewalks, parking lots and streets numerous times after the storm due to freezing conditions.

**POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY: Councilman Graham, Chair**

During the winter season it is important to prepare for potential emergencies.

Stay informed to Borough events and issues by checking our website at GarwoodPD.Org and our social media outlets.

Sign up for instant text and email notifications through Nixle.com

Register yourself or family members with special needs at Ready.NJ.Gov to be added to our list of residents needing special assistance such as power for medical equipment and oxygen.

Prepare for short term power outages with an ample supply of food, medication, water and blankets and batteries.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: RECREATION, HISTORICAL AND CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEES:**

**Councilwoman Salmon, Chair**

Week 1 and it has been a busy one.

Recreation to start:

I was able to set up a meeting with Kyle, our Boro Admin, and Ralph Bernardo, our Recreation Director, to review many aspects within Garwood Recreation.

It was an extremely productive meeting. We reviewed our Winter Programs and flyer which has been revised and updated, a new flyer is available on our borough and recreation Facebook page! Make sure not to miss family skate night being held at the Westfield Ice Rink on January 29th from 5:50-7:20. You can sign up by downloading the form and returning it to Borough Hall.

Ralph, Kyle and I spent several hours reviewing many aspects of the recreation department. From new program ideas to scheduling and management of the Recreation Complex. Taking a deeper dive into the rentals currently held at our complex was the first thing I took a look at. I asked Ralph to check with surrounding municipalities regarding rental rates. He went out immediately the next day and found out that we are significantly under-charging other municipalities for the use of our recreation complex. On average surrounding towns are renting similar spaces for \$200-\$250 per hour. Garwood's current average for a rental is \$50 per hour. Please keep in mind this is for NON-Resident rentals. For example, a Non Garwood based Youth Soccer Organization rented in the fall of 2020 the borough charged \$4800 for the use of the complex a total of 96 hours. If we were charging the appropriate rate the rental cost would have been almost \$20,000, at the lowest average fee of \$200. That is a loss of revenue of over \$15,000 just on this one rental. We have multiple programs renting at the complex currently. I hope that I can count on the full committee's support in the revision of our rates at our upcoming Community Engagement Meeting. This is way over due and needs immediate attention, especially prior to any Spring bookings.

Moving on to Celebrations:

I spoke with our Celebrations Chair and we had a nice conversation regarding upcoming events and plans the committee would like to see in the near future. The celebration Chair and I are meeting tomorrow so she can bring me up to date prior to the first celebrations meeting at the end of January 14, 2022

And last but definitely not least, the Historical Committee: I received a very nice welcome email from the historical committee and I am looking forward to our first meeting next week. Thank You that is all for my report tonight, Mayor.

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Councilman Kearney**

Thank you, Mayor. We have carried three main items forward to this Committee in 2022:

- 1 . Live Streaming/recording of public meetings
- 2 . Review of communications systems
- 3 . Police/Fire radios and 9-1-1 Dispatch

Regarding our live stream and recording of meetings: We have come a long way in a short time. We began soon after returning to in person meetings in July of 2021, and even though we've had a few glitches in the matrix from time to time, including one about two hours ago that I got a phone call from Mr. Harris on, as the Mayor mentioned in her reorganization address last week we're really in the vanguard with working hybrid meetings and multiple options for access. The public, staff and members of the Council can view or participate remotely through Zoom, view a live stream on YouTube or pull up the live recorded video on YouTube after the fact. This is something I pushed very hard for personally, and it is a victory for transparency and public engagement in local government. Over the winter break, we were able to replace a few older microphones from the existing public address system in the Council Chamber which dated back to sometime in the 1990s that were causing issues with audio on the live stream and will continue to seek improvements in this area.

On the topic of communications systems: I continued work over the break with the outgoing Committee to streamline and centralize communications throughout the Borough. Mr. Harris has had several additional meetings since our last meeting with vendors who provide website and smartphone application integrations. The full committee will meet on this with Mr. Harris prior to our next Council meeting, so I hope to have something to present at that time.

Also related to communications systems, the outgoing committee recommendation to the Borough Administrator regarding the Borough's social media communications was also for streamlining and centralization of the numerous and competing Facebook pages for Garwood. During the month of January, the Borough will be transitioning numerous Facebook pages over to the "Garwood Borough Government" page. The Police and Fire Departments along with the Library will continue to maintain their own pages, all other pages on Facebook will be merged with the main Government page so residents have one location on Facebook to go for information. All posts to the main Government page will require the approval of the Borough Administrator or someone designated to do so in their absence. This will happen on a rolling basis in January as there were a couple of instances where we needed to track down a page administrator, so I'd ask everyone to get out ahead of that and begin following the Garwood Borough Government page now! I'm not 100% clear on how the merging process works but I think followers of the old pages will be given an option to continue following the merged page.

Regarding first responder portable radios and 9-1-1 Dispatch: I've previously met with Mr. Harris and the Police & Fire Chiefs to discuss equipment needs and requested detailed estimates for needed equipment as well as implementation plans which include short- and long-term equipment, personnel and fringe costs both with and without a shared service. We will be meeting with the County later this month to hear a presentation on the regional dispatch and to discuss both finances and what equipment will be provided to us from the LEAP grants I've previously reported on. Once we have all the numbers in, our next step is the town hall meeting I requested Mayor Todisco to hold on this topic. I intend to go over all the options to level with the public on how much each will cost, with the understanding that this is a decision which will lock Garwood into a particular path for many years no matter which way we go and that doing nothing is not an option. If it

sounds like you heard an echo in here, this is similar to what was reported by Buildings & Grounds a few moments ago. We have a couple of big decisions here this year. Not every Council has the opportunity to be involved in a decision that can't be undone the next year.

Finally, last year, I also reported on Small Business initiatives through this Committee such as "Shop Local" and my favorite "Garwood Restaurant Week"; this year the Mayor has moved this work to the new Small Business Liaison position which I will have a report on shortly.

**BOARD OF HEALTH LIAISON: Councilman Graham**

Councilman Graham provided highlighted information from the Westfield Board of Health's monthly COVID update as of January 6, 2022.

**LIBRARY, MAYOR'S REPRESENTATIVE: Councilman Lazarow**

Councilman Lazarow stated the Library Board met on January 12<sup>th</sup> and appointed Board Members for 2022.

**JANUARY EVENTS**

**January 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 3:30 pm –Game Makers** - Kids will create characters & worlds for their own series of interactive video games, all while developing their coding and critical-thinking skills with the age-appropriate Scratch Jr. coding language developed at MIT's Media Lab" Registration required. Limit 8. Once registered a Zoom link will be provided

**January 18, at 3 pm - Virtual Kid's and Adult Craft** Participants will pick up craft supplies and then watch craft tutorial on the Library's Facebook page at 3 pm. The video will be available for viewing thereafter. Registration is required for craft kits and is limited to 15 participants for kids and 10 participants for adults. Sign up on the Library website's events calendar or by phone.

**January 27 at 7:00 pm** - Lead Like a Pro, How to be an Effective Athletic Coach - a Virtual Presentation – Whether you are a volunteer coaching your child's team, a part-time high school coach, or a full-time college or professional coach, this is the program for you. Join Dr. Matthew Raidbard, author, college basketball coach, and athletic administrator as he explains how to enhance your leadership style and become a better coach for your athletes and team. Registration required. Limit 30. Once registered a Zoom link will be provided.

**LIBRARY HOURS:** Curbside service is still available. The Library will be closed January 17 for Martin Luther King Day.

**SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON: Councilman Kearney**

Councilman Kearney stated the School Board held their reorganization meeting on January 4<sup>th</sup> and appointed 4 new Board Members for 2022.

The Garwood Board of Education held their annual reorganization meeting on Tuesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. Four members were sworn in, April Farrell, Sal Piarulli and Jennifer Uva to full terms and Tracey Roland for the remainder of an unexpired term. Tracey Roland was also voted in by a majority of the Board as Board President and Tim Ryan as the Vice President. Congratulations to them all! The Board will be holding their first regular meeting of 2022 on Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

**GARWOOD SENIOR CITIZEN LIAISON: Council President Blumenstock**

Senior Director Kathleen Wierzbinski has cancelled all recreation classes for January due to the rise in Covid cases. The Senior Club also cancelled its January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting and has made the decision to cancel next week's meeting as well. I'll provide an update for February at our next meeting. Please call Borough Hall with any questions or email [garwood@garwood.org](mailto:garwood@garwood.org) for more information, That's all for my report, Mayor.



**SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY LIAISON: Councilman Kearney**

Thank you, Mayor Todisco, both for this assignment as the first ever Council Small Business Liaison, and also for your support of the Small Business Advisory Board from its inception to now.

The Board met virtually earlier this month, where I was able to introduce Mr. Harris to the members in attendance. We have hit the ground running in 2022, with the Board proposing to hold a formal “kick off” event in early March to raise awareness of its own functions and to create a networking opportunity for other small businesses in Garwood. Every small business owner will be invited; on this topic I enlisted Mr. Harris to request business owner contact updates through the Police Department. Formal invitations will go out in the month of February to all small business owners, the Greater Area Westfield Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor and Council and the Planning Board. I’m pleased to report Board member Lee Frankel will make the Crossroads available to the Board to host the kick-off!

Board member Stefanie Savino has volunteered to design the invitation flyer and also a logo for the Board to help with the publicity for this event. Our next planning meeting is scheduled for the end of January, so I’ll have more to report on the kick-off event in our first February meeting.

The Board also discussed initiatives for 2022, including small business spotlight articles to appear in the weekly Borough email newsletter, “Shop Local” (which will include the Board designing some new catchy “hashtag” options for social media), a Wellness week to highlight the many Gyms, spas, salons, personal trainers and other such types of businesses we have in town and finally (yes I saved the best for last) the return of Garwood Restaurant Week!

We have a lot of positive energy and great ideas in this group, and I am really looking forward to working with them this year and making sure people everywhere know Garwood can be a destination for shopping, eating out, services and more. Small town, open for business!

**OFFICER’S REPORTS:**

Zoning Officer Report for December, 2021.

[https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Addendum\\_December\\_2021.pdf](https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Addendum_December_2021.pdf)

Property Maintenance Officer Report for December, 2021.

[https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Property\\_Maintenance\\_12-2021.pdf](https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Property_Maintenance_12-2021.pdf)

Chief of Police Monthly Report for December, 2021.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Is there anyone in the audience who wishes to address the Mayor and Council please step to the microphone, and state your full name and address. Please limit your comments to five minutes.

John Pritchard, 410 Spruce Street, sang a song regarding veterans .

Bruce Paterson, 325 Willow Avenue, requested clarification regarding the Borough’s Humvee vehicle.

Mr. Paterson requested clarification regarding the liaison to the Community Engagement Committee.

Mr. Paterson requested clarification regarding the department head overview presentations.

Mr. Paterson requested clarification regarding the FEMA funds for SCBA equipment.

Mr. Paterson requested clarification regarding the review of the architectural RFP proposals.

Mr. Paterson requested clarification regarding the COVID death numbers.

Mr. Paterson requested clarification regarding the County dispatch program.

A motion was made by Councilman Kearney, second by Councilman Lazarow, to close public comment.  
All in favor.

Mayor Todisco requested Chief Wright provide clarification regarding the status of the Borough's Humvee vehicle.  
Chief Wright provided the clarification requested.

Mayor Todisco provided clarification regarding the liaison assigned to the Community Engagement Committee.  
Councilwoman Salmon stated her support as liaison in said assignment.

Mayor Todisco stated the department heads scheduled for presentations at upcoming Council meetings will be posted on the Borough's website and social media page.

Mayor Todisco requested Councilman Kearney provide clarification regarding FEMA funds for the SCBA equipment.

Councilman Kearney stated additional information is forthcoming.

Mr. Harris clarified the grant application will request turnout gear and SCBA equipment totaling approximately \$300,000.

Mayor Todisco requested clarification from Mr. Harris regarding the Borough professionals that comprise the architectural review committee.

Mr. Harris provided the clarification requested and stated Borough Engineer, Mike Disko will be participating in the review of the architectural firms selected by the review committee.

Mayor Todisco provided clarification regarding the COVID death numbers.

Mayor Todisco stated the meeting at the County regarding the dispatch program will be a closed meeting.

Mayor Todisco stated Councilman Kearney will provide a thorough report to the Council following said meeting.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

(Adoption upon Roll Call)

Consent agenda items are considered to be routine and will be enacted with a single motion; any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of funds; any item requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda; all Consent Agenda items will be reflected in the full minutes.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 22-038**

**WHEREAS** there exists in the Rahway River Basin, conditions of serious and repeated flood damage with resulting threat to life and property in areas within each municipality which is party to this Agreement; and

**WHEREAS** the Parties intend to act in a cooperative manner to engage in planning, engineering, legal and environmental assessment activities that continue a process to determine the most feasible and effective program for the alleviation of these flooding events; and

**WHEREAS** the Parties, simultaneous with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the New Jersey Environmental Protection Agency (DEP), have been working to finalize the US Army Corps Rahway River Flood Mitigation Study which included a 2012 interlocal cost sharing agreement that has been annually updated and is now replaced by the new agreement; and

**WHEREAS** Millburn Township is willing to continue to act as lead agency for the phase of work set forth in this agreement as herein, the Parties agree as follows.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the Borough of Garwood, County of Union, State of New Jersey, hereby authorize the Mayor and Borough Clerk to sign the Mayors Council for Rahway River Watershed Flood Control Municipal Cost Sharing Agreement FY 2022.

**RESOLUTION NO. 22-039**

**AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH OF GARWOOD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONWIDE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS WITH JOHNSON & JOHNSON, MCKESSON, CARDINAL HEALTH, AND AMERISOURCEBERGEN TO RESOLVE CLAIMS INVOLVING THEIR ROLES IN THE COUNTRY'S OPIOID CRISIS.**

**WHEREAS**, the ongoing opioid crisis in America has had a devastating effect on individuals and communities, including many here in the Borough of Garwood; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Garwood is a party to a class action lawsuit filed by state, local, and tribal governments, hospitals, individuals, and insurers, seeking damages against opioid manufacturers, distributors, and retailers in *In re National Prescription Opiate Litigation*, Case No. 17-md-02804, MDL No. 2804, in the District Court for the Northern District of Ohio; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 20, 2021, Acting Attorney General Andrew J. Bruck announced that New Jersey intends to join nationwide settlement agreements with New Jersey based pharmaceutical company Johnson & Johnson and the United States' three largest pharmaceutical distributors, McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen, to resolve claims involving their roles in fomenting the country's opioid crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, participation in the nationwide settlements will not only hold the companies financially accountable by requiring payments of as much as \$26 billion, the settlements will provide funding to support programs that address the opioid epidemic in New Jersey and across the country, and will require significant changes in the pharmaceutical industry aimed at preventing similar crises in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed settlements provide:

“the Distributors to pay up to \$21 billion over 18 years and Janssen to pay up to \$5 billion over no more than 9 years, for a total of \$26 billion (the “Settlement Amount”). Of the Settlement Amount, approximately \$22.7 billion is earmarked for use by participating states and subdivisions to remediate and abate the impacts of the opioid crisis. The Settlements also contain injunctive relief provisions governing the opioid marketing, sale and distribution practices at the heart of the states' and subdivisions' lawsuits and further require the Distributors to implement additional safeguards to prevent diversion of prescription opioids;” and

**WHEREAS**, participation by a significant number of states, county, and municipal governments nationwide must agree to the proposed terms in order for the settlements to take effect; and

**WHEREAS**, provided enough states opt to participate in the settlements, their subdivisions will have through January 26, 2022 to join; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Garwood's share in the settlement funds will ultimately depend on the number of counties and municipalities that opt-in, population of each participating county and municipality, and effects of the opioid epidemic on each participating community; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the best interests of the Borough of Garwood and its residents to participate and join in the settlement agreements in order to hold these companies financially accountable for the ongoing opioid crisis and to implement the necessary changes to prevent such a crisis from happening again in the near future.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the Borough of Garwood, County of Union, State of New Jersey, hereby authorize the Administrator of the Borough of Garwood to sign any documents necessary in order to join the settlement agreements with Johnson & Johnson, McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen to resolve claims involving their participation in the opioid crisis.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that upon effectuation of the settlement agreement the Borough of Garwood agrees to dismiss its claims against the settling parties.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Municipal Clerk of the Borough of Garwood shall forward a copy of this Resolution to the Office of the Attorney General of New Jersey.

A motion was made by Councilman Kearney, second by Council President Blumenstock, to adopt Consent Agenda.

Roll Call:

<b>Councilman Graham</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilwoman Loffredo</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Kearney</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilwoman Salmon</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Lazarow</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Council President Blumenstock</b>	<b>AYE</b>

