

The regular meeting of the Borough of Riverdale Mayor and Council opened on the above date at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Budesheim presiding.

**ROLL CALL: Present: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel**  
**Absent: Carelli (work obligation)**

**Also Present: Police Chief Smith, Fire Chief Sturm**

Mayor Budesheim announced that proper notice of this meeting was made as to time, date, place and agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES DATED:**

Regular Meeting - August 19, 2013  
 Workshop Meeting - September 4, 2013

Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to approve the above listed minutes as read.

**ALL IN FAVOR**

**PRESENTATION TO HONOR TEEN VOLUNTEERS TO THE RIVERDALE LIBRARY.**

Mayor Budesheim stated that it gives us great pleasure to recognize the youths who have volunteered their time at the library this past summer. We do this every year and we appreciate the work that they do and are very proud of them. It is also a tribute to the parents for encouraging them to take part in this program. Children's Librarian Lara Cohen explained the program and expressed her gratitude to the volunteers. Councilwoman Wetzel presented them with certificates.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NO. 1:**

There being no comments, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Wetzel, that the public portion be closed.

**ALL IN FAVOR**

**ORDINANCES:**

Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, to approve the following resolution:

- 1) **Resolution No. 72-2013;** Capital Budget Amendment for Ordinance No. 12-2013.

**ROLL CALL: Ayes: Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel**  
**Nays: None**  
**(5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**COPY OF RESOLUTION IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 104-A**

- 1) Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, to introduce the following ordinance and moved its adoption.

**ORDINANCES (continued):**

**ORDINANCE 12-2013**

**BOND ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF RIVERDALE, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING IN ITS ENTIRETY BOND ORDINANCE NUMBER 4-2010, FINALLY ADOPTED MARCH 15, 2010, AS AMENDED AND SUPPLEMENTED BY BOND ORDINANCE NO. 8-2012 FINALLY ADOPTED DECEMBER 3, 2012 AND AS FURTHER SUPPLEMENTED BY BOND ORDINANCE NO. 5-2013 FINALLY ADOPTED APRIL 15, 2013**

**ROLL CALL:       Ayes:     Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel  
                      Nays:     None  
                      (5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**COPY OF ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 105-B**

Mayor Budesheim stated that the Cablevision Franchise term was changed from 10 to 3 years.

- 2) Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to introduce the following ordinance and moved its adoption.

**ORDINANCE 13-2013**

**AN ORDINANCE GRANTING MUNICIPAL CONSENT FOR THE OPERATION OF A CABLE TELEVISION SYSTEM WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF RIVERDALE, NEW JERSEY TO CABLEVISION OF OAKLAND, LLC**

**ROLL CALL:       Ayes:     Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel  
                      Nays:     None  
                      (5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**COPY OF ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 105-C**

- 3) Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilwoman Wetzel, to introduce the following ordinance and moved its adoption.

**ORDINANCE 14-2013**

**ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 26 OF THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF RIVERDALE AND AMENDING THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE RIVERDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**ROLL CALL:       Ayes:     Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel  
                      Nays:     None  
                      (5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**COPY OF ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 105-D**

**RESOLUTIONS:**

Mayor Budesheim requested resolution No. 5 be removed for discussion.

Councilman Astarita set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Falkoski, to approve the following resolutions:

- 1) Payment of Claims. (including the following)
  - a. Darmofalski Engineering TCR Escrow \$ 260.00
- 2) **Resolution No. 66-2013**; Approval of submittal of DOT Grant application for the Federal Place and Halsey Avenue Improvement Project with a total eligible for aid amount of \$396,425.00 and a total project amount of \$431,425.00.
- 3) **Resolution No. 67-2013**; Approval of submittal of DOT Grant application for the Sidewalk Improvements to Federal Place and Halsey Avenue with a total eligible for aid amount of \$281,200.00 and a total project amount of \$311,200.00.
- 4) **Resolution No. 68-2013**; Salary Resolution – Van Orden & DelCastillo.
- 5) (Removed)
- 6) **Resolution No. 70-2013**; Refund of Tax Overpayments, Block 40, Lot 2.5103, Riverdale Investors in the amount of \$1,366.88, year 2013, overpayment. (copy transmitted with agenda)
- 7) **Resolution No. 71-2013**; Refund of Tax Overpayments, Block 12.01, Lot 37.01, Leon & Berit Belyea in the amount of \$5,918.00, year 2009 – 2012, Balance of Tax Court Judgment. (copy transmitted with agenda)
- 8) Approval of the release of funds for unused sick time in the amount of \$9,000 and unused vacation time (13 vacation days at \$218.12 per day) in the amount of \$2,835.56 payable to Donna Lavernia, Bookkeeper upon her retirement, October 31, 2013. (copy transmitted with agenda)
- 9) Authorization of extended hours request for Target Corporation to open their store located on Route 23 North at 12:00 a.m. on November 29, 2013. Appropriate fees have been received.
- 10) Resolution to approve the purchase of the 4RE In-Car Camera System under State Contract A81300 in the amount of \$44,719.00 upon adoption of Bond Ordinance and proper estoppel period. (copy transmitted with agenda)

**ROLL CALL:**       **Ayes:   Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel**  
                           **Nays:   None**  
                           **(5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**COPY OF BILLS LIST AND RESOLUTIONS IN FULL ON PAGE NO. 106- E, F, G, H, I AND K****MAYOR REPORT:**

Mayor Budesheim stated the reason he pulled resolution No. 5 is that we are looking to bring the Police Department up to staff with the appointment of a Lieutenant. Unfortunately we received a letter that was sent to our attorney stating there is a pending lawsuit regarding promotions within the department. We feel until that is resolved that we won't be able to go forward with that.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

- 1) Payment in lieu of health benefits – discussion or decision to have a policy to offer employees payment through salary if they waive their health benefit coverage.

**OTHER BUSINESS (continued):**

Mayor Budesheim stated this would be beneficial to the town. We would save 75% of our costs. Council was in agreement.

Thereupon, Councilman Guis set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to offer employees payment through salary if they waive their health benefit coverage.

**ROLL CALL:**       **Ayes:**   **Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel**  
                           **Nays:**   **None**  
                           **(5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1) Bid specifications for repair of municipal building roof.

Councilman Astarita stated that the Borough Engineer did not get back to him but he has the plans. He received correspondence from a secondary vendor for the foam roof but he doesn't seem willing to come out and place a bid. Mayor Budesheim stated we should get this resolved by the next meeting so we can authorize going to bid. He also said the architect has concerns about the foam roof. Councilman Guis recommended a meeting with the engineer and architect to make a decision.

Thereupon, Councilman Astarita set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Mastrangelo, to go out to bid for a new roof for the municipal building subject to the recommendation of the architect and borough engineer.

**ROLL CALL:**       **Ayes:**   **Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel**  
                           **Nays:**   **None**  
                           **(5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** Councilman Falkoski reported the court report for the month of August.

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS:** Councilwoman Wetzel thanked everyone who participated at the Street Fair. The day was a success.

**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:** No Report.

**PERSONNEL:** Councilman Mastrangelo reported that they have a candidate for the bookkeeper position. Carla Mecionis has some construction code official, some TACO, a bachelor's degree in accounting, graduated at the top of her class and has municipal experience in other areas. I recommend her for the position.

Councilman Falkoski stated that he sat in on the initial interviews and he felt there was another person better qualified. Basically it is a bookkeeping position and there was only one candidate that had bookkeeping experience and that was Susan Ramirez. That's who I would select.

Councilman Guis suggested that we might attract a wider range of people advertising through the League of Municipalities instead of just our own website. I think it's important to have someone from Finance on that interview process and also possibly our CFO. These are people that work directly with them in charge of those departments.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued):**

Councilman Mastrangelo felt that should have been brought up a month ago not after he made the decision. Councilman Guis stated that no one knew the interviews were taking place and that Councilman Carelli made some valid points in his email. Councilwoman Wetzel agreed. Councilman Astarita stated that his list of qualifications would be good but we're looking for a part-timer who can handle several jobs. Somebody with these credentials would be looking to make more than we're willing to pay. Borough Clerk Talerico stated that all of those items are part of the job. Councilwoman Wetzel read the email that Councilman Carelli had sent to the Council listing the qualifications he felt would be necessary and offering his assistance in finding a qualified candidate. Mayor Budesheim stated that we wanted to have a person working for most of September a few hours each week to be trained. He recommended Carla Mecionis since she has an accounting degree. Councilman Guis stated he would still like to see a recommendation from the CFO. Mayor Budesheim stated that is not his department. Councilman Astarita stated that he knows Carla Mecionis and had dealings with her in the Bloomingdale Building Department. What I noticed is her smile and customer service way of thinking. She is my son-in-law's sister and I do see her about once a year. I have no vested interest in this other than I know she is a real smart woman and has a smile on her face all the time. I think she would be a good addition to our employee group. That's why I actually recommended her for this.

Thereupon, Councilman Mastrangelo set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, to appoint Carla Mecionis as part-time Bookkeeper.

**ROLL CALL:**       **Ayes:   Astarita, Mastrangelo**  
                           **Nays:   Falkoski, Guis, Wetzel**  
                           **(3ayes – 2 nays – motion denied)**

Mayor Budesheim stated that since the Finance Chairman doesn't feel the other candidate is qualified we have to start over. Councilwoman Wetzel recommended that the candidates meet with the CFO and Finance Chairman. If they are comfortable we should still reconsider her. Councilman Guis agreed.

**BOROUGH CLERK REPORT:**

Borough Clerk Talerico reported that the police secretary did not get her retro check and there was an error on the salary resolution.

Thereupon, Councilman Mastrangelo set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Guis, to approve amending the Part Time Police Secretary salary to \$25,194 annual rate.

**ROLL CALL:**       **Ayes:   Astarita, Falkoski, Guis, Mastrangelo, Wetzel**  
                           **Nays:   None**  
                           **(5 ayes – 0 nays – motion carried)**

**BOROUGH ATTORNEY REPORT:** No Report.

**PERSONNEL MATTER:**

- 1) Personnel matter with accordance of a Rice Letter sent to a borough employee; employee has requested the matter be discussed in open session. (copy of employee response transmitted to governing body with agenda)

Councilman Mastrangelo asked Sam Dedio to explain why he went to Bloomingdale on a few occasions and called there questioning the person who applied for the bookkeeping position.

**PERSONNEL MATTER (continued):**

Sam Dedio asked the Borough Attorney if the rice letter was done in a legal manner as it did not state the reason. Borough Attorney Oostdyk responded that the letter stated it was a personnel matter about a term and condition of his employment and it was done legally. Mr. Dedio explained that he was asked by someone to look on the borough website at the job opening for a part-time bookkeeper and look at the last qualification that was required. I did and I noticed it was the Roadrunner software which is strictly a Building Department function. It's a program that I know and I was curious why someone for accounting would need to know also about the Building Department. I was a little concerned over the weekend. On Monday I asked the Mayor and he said it had nothing to do with me. He explained that Carla had come for the Tax Assessor's job and didn't qualify but he noticed she had an accounting degree. I called her in Bloomingdale and told her there was a job opening for someone with an accounting degree and suggested she apply for it. She asked me how that concerned me in the Building Department and I told her that I also do water and sewer. She said she was planning to call me and come down to see how we run our office. I went to Bloomingdale because I received a letter and permit for them in the mail which I dropped off and she happened to be there. I asked her how it was going with the application. She said her husband lost his job, she has no benefits and is looking for something different. I told her if they promise her a job to make sure she gets it in writing. That's the only thing I told her and the only contact I had with her.

Councilman Mastrangelo stated that the first meeting with Carla was back when they were looking for a tax assessor and she applied. We were impressed with her but she wasn't qualified for the job. The Mayor and I told her there would be an opening coming up that might be a good fit. We told her to keep watching the postings on the website. I spoke to Carla and some of her co-workers and this is what I got from Carla:

"On Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Dedio phoned Bloomingdale Construction Department in the afternoon and inquired if Carla had an accounting degree. He told her he did not understand the requirements for the position posted and asked what she knew of it. On Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Dedio stopped in Bloomingdale Construction Department and stated that he was looking for Carla who was not in, she was on vacation, because he wanted to ask her why she was after his job. He followed his statement with "he was only joking". Mr. Dedio then had a conversation with her boss. Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Dedio came into Bloomingdale Construction Department a second time and addressed both Carla and a co-worker. He questioned her about the job posting requirements, specifically her degree and Construction Department experience. He stated he was out of the office only one week a year so there would be no need for coverage for him nor is a degree in bookkeeping necessary. He repeatedly referred to "we" when he spoke leaving Carla with the impression that this topic was being discussed with others in the Municipal Building. Friday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Dedio again phoned Bloomingdale Construction Department and spoke to a co-worker about a permit but then proceeded to tell her that the interviews for the job were being held that morning. He further informed them that the interviews were scheduled at 20 minute intervals and Carla was at that very moment awaiting her interview in the Riverdale Municipal Lobby."

Councilman Mastrangelo said that you can see her concern. She's applying for a job and it seems like you're talking to her, asking her questions, talking to her boss, talking to her co-workers. It kind of skewed the results. When she came in that day she was frazzled and she did not interview well that day the same way she did the previous interview. She came in and before she sat down Donna said to her "Do you have a degree in bookkeeping?". It was embarrassing and that set the whole tone for what Joe saw with Carla. I felt that she was being harassed by you.

**PERSONNEL MATTER (continued):**

Mr. Dedio stated that he can understand but was trying to help her when I told her to apply for the job. Her main concern was not with bookkeeping but she was asking me about the Building Department so of course I felt concerned that somebody was after my job. I only talked to her twice and don't know where these other conversations came from. If she got offended then I apologize to her. It wasn't meant to be that way.

Mayor Budesheim stated that the Building Department is doing worse this year. We're about 70% of the way into the year and we've collected about 22% of revenues. I do have to revisit that. Mr. Dedio stated that our permit fees are some of the lowest in the area. Mayor Budesheim stated that he was doing comps and some towns have lower fees, Lincoln Park being one of them, and other fees were pretty much the same as other towns. Even if you double the fees the work just isn't there. Mr. Dedio asked what happened to the money from a few years ago when the condos and apartments were built. Shouldn't that have been set aside for the Building Department? Our department is a service to the people of this town. Mayor Budesheim stated that money was used in the budget and kept the taxes down. If a company starts losing money after having successful years they have to change their approach. We have a \$90,000 cap and we've taken almost \$60,000 of that to keep this one department going. We have a financial responsibility and a lot of other expenses for services was can't cut. This is an area where we can do a shared service and we have to look into it.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION NO. 2:**

There being no comments, Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita, that the public portion be closed.

**ALL IN FAVOR.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilman Falkoski set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Astarita to adjourn the meeting.

**ALL IN FAVOR.**

Adjourned: 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Carol J. Talerico, R.M.C.  
Municipal Clerk