



2023 Mayor of Riverdale Address

By Paul M. Carelli on January 4, 2023

I would like to start out by wishing everyone here today a very happy and healthy new year. For the sake of time, I will keep my address short this year, but I would like to highlight some of the accomplishments despite the obstacles put before us.

As always, the Council and Borough Employees once again stepped up and we were able to accomplish many projects.

FINANCE:

- The budget for 2022 had a municipal tax levy increase of 2.0% that equated to an increase of \$67.00 for the Average Residential homeowner. This was accomplished despite losing another \$50,000 in revenue due the lasting effects of the pandemic and a bad economy. As always, we plan to adopt another tax friendly budget in 2023.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Under the leadership of Chief Smith, the department continues to be one of the best trained, equipped, and professional departments around. We thank them for their commitment to Riverdale during these challenging times.
- In 2022, we saw the promotions of Patrolman Dan Salvati to the position of Sergeant and the hiring of James Felano and Ramon Espinal as our newest Patrolman.
- We also wished Sergeant Chris Biro and Patrolman Gary Keil happy and well-deserved retirements. We thank them for their professional and dedicated service to the Borough of Riverdale.
- 2023 will be a big transition year in the Police Department with the retirement of Chief Kevin Smith on July 1st. More promotions are expected as we enter the new year.
- I also want to thank Chief Jim Regeling, Assistant Chief Pat Cleary and the rest of the Riverdale Fire Department and Office of Emergency Management for keeping us safe every day and guiding us through the pandemic. Their commitment to the Borough has always been impressive and we are grateful to them.

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Our aggressive road improvement program completed another 10 streets with drainage, curbing, sidewalks and paving. We expect to complete the paving of Newark Pompton Turnpike early in the spring and are expecting Morris County to complete Hamburg Turnpike as well. We thank the County for paving Riverdale Road in 2022.
- A special thanks to DPW Superintendent Steve Schotanus and his entire team for their efforts throughout the year. Especially during these cold months, we know they are ready to hit the streets when the snow starts falling. They really are the best around.
- We also welcomed Riverdale resident Sal Negrini to the DPW team in 2022.

PUBLIC UTILITIES:

- Phase 1 through 4 of our Sewer Expansion project provided the ability to connect to over 250 homes. We will pause the expansion project in 2023 in order to celebrate Riverdale's 100th anniversary.
- Phase 5 which includes Mead Avenue, Arlington Place, and Haycock Avenue has been designed and is ready for startup in 2024 and Phase 6 which includes Halsey Avenue and Federal Place is currently under a feasibility study.
- Riverdale has received a Morris County Trail Construction Grant of \$43,950 for the design of a walking path around Independence Park. The project is expected to start in 2024 after the completion of our new stone retaining wall at the park. If you haven't seen the progress, I urge you to take a look as it is very impressive.

COMMUNICATIONS

- In early 2022, the Borough of Riverdale launched a new website. The new look is much easier to navigate and residents can sign up to receive a weekly newsletter delivered to their email.
- Our social media presence with regards to Facebook, Twitter, and our Borough website continues to grow. Special thanks once again to our social media Director, Michael Carelli who manages these sites daily and keeps the information up to date and relevant.
- Looking ahead, plans are underway for Riverdale's 100th Anniversary in 2023.
- The 100th Anniversary Gala has been booked for April 1, 2023 at the Legacy Castle. Registration forms are available online or at the Borough Hall. I urge everyone to book a table of 10 for this memorable event. We are hoping to see current, past, and friends of Riverdale at the event.
- The 100th Anniversary Committee has been working hard to create some fun events. We are planning a Carnival in May, the sale of 100th Anniversary apparel, historic events, a Riverdaleopoly game, various memorabilia items, and new banners celebrating the year along Newark Pompton Turnpike. We are also hoping to decorate Hamburg Turnpike as well.

PERSONNEL:

- In December, the Planning Board celebrated the 40 years of service to the community by the Board Attorney, John Barbarula.
- The Riverdale Municipal Court continued the shared service for the Butler Municipal Court.
- 2023 will continue to be a challenging year with the expected retirements.

Most of all, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Governing Body. Because of their commitment and expertise, our accomplishments continue to mount. Thank you for all you do for the borough.

In summary, we once again have ambitious goals for 2023 – but I know we have the right people to get the job done. I want to thank the entire hard-working borough employees who make it all happen.

A.J. Jalloh – our Borough Clerk

Lisa O’Neill – our Deputy Clerk

Linda Roetman – our Borough Secretary, Zoning Official, Property Maintenance Enforcement

Connie Anderson – our Finance and Tax Assistant, Qualified Purchasing Agent, and Registrar.

Steve Schotanus – our Public Works Superintendent and his DPW Department

Krista Osborne – our Recreation Director

Michael Carelli – our Social Media Director

Chief Kevin Smith and the Riverdale Police Department

Chief Jim Regeling and the Riverdale Fire Department

Eliana Kiesling – our Court Administrator and the Riverdale Municipal Court

Therese McClachrie and the Riverdale Public Library

And all our great volunteers on our various commissions and boards

Thank you all – we appreciate your hard work and dedication to Riverdale.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and successful New Year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul M. Carelli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.