

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 17, 2024 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 Perron, Reynolds, 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, 2024, be accepted as submitted. Councilmember Reynolds seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Vagianos moved that the Village Council minutes of January 29, February 5, February 7, February 14, and February 21, 2024, having been reviewed by the Village Council and now available in the Village Clerk’s Office, be approved as submitted. Councilmember Weitz seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

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

4. **PROCLAMATION**

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

Councilmember Winograd read the following proclamation:

Mayor Vagianos said that he has worked alongside the members of the Parks, Recreation and Conservation (PRC) Board for many years. He stated that the mission of the members is to make Ridgewood parks and recreational facilities a part of every resident's daily life. There was a resounding round of applause for those PRC members in the audience this evening.

**5. PRESENTATION BY CHRIS WIDELO OF AARP – AARP 5-YEAR PLAQUE –
COMMEMORATING VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD'S PROGRESS AS MEMBER
OF THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES AND STATES**

The Village Councilmembers went to the floor to accept the plaque from Chris Widelo of AARP. Mr. Widelo stated that he is the State Director for AARP in New Jersey. He explained that he is present at the meeting this evening to present the AARP Network of Age Friendly States and Communities Five-Year Cycle Award to the Village of Ridgewood. Many initiatives in Ridgewood have been made possible through funding obtained from the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation, a foundation founded in 1967 which makes grants to organizations working in their program areas. Mr. Widelo congratulated the Village on obtaining some additional funding to be used on an "Age Friendly Tool Kit." He described Ridgewood as a leader among age friendly communities, by demonstrating a willingness to collaborate with others to expand the reach of their age friendly network.

Mr. Widelo highlighted some of the achievements by Ridgewood during the past five years. These achievements focus on walkability, transportation, and affordable housing. He said that although AARP is mostly geared towards individuals aged 50 or older, the goal of AARP is to make communities better for people of all ages. The Village conducted a sidewalk audit and worked to improve crosswalks, and also expanded and raised awareness about on-demand transit offerings for older adults. To ensure that the Village's Master Plan reflected its residents' housing needs, the Village included older adult residents in focus groups. Residents were informed about property tax relief as well as other housing assistance, such as home sharing. Other initiatives by the Village focused on food access, social activities and dementia-friendly business practices. Mr. Widelo said that he was very impressed by the Village's progress.

Mr. Widelo commended Mayor Vagianos, Deputy Mayor Perron, and Village Councilmembers Reynolds, Weitz and Winograd for their commitment to making Ridgewood an age friendly community. He also thanked Deanna Schablik of the Community Center Advisory Board; Nancy Bigos, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department; Beth Abbott and Sheila Brogan of Age Friendly Ridgewood; Carol Bialkowski, Director of Communications and Special Projects; and the Community Center Foundation. There was a round of applause.

Mayor Vagianos said that he was honored to receive this award on the Village's behalf, and he thanked all of the volunteers who worked tirelessly to enable Ridgewood to receive this honor as an age friendly community, particularly Sheila Brogan, Beth Abbott, and the Parks and Recreation Department.

Sheila Brogan said that Age Friendly Ridgewood is grateful to the Taub Foundation, which provided grants so that many projects could be initiated. She thanked Joan Groome, of the Chamber of Commerce; Ms. Bigos; Deanna Schablik; Tony Damiano, of the Ridgewood Guild; Sue Ulrich from Ridgecrest; Dawn Cetrulo, of the Health Department; Surbhi Kapadia; Danielle Pagani; Gwen Hauck from SHARE; Stephanie McTigue (social worker); the Ridgewood Library; Robin Ritter and Roberta Panjwani; former Ridgewood Mayor Ramon Hache; Mayor Vagianos; Village Councilmembers; Village Manager; Village Clerk; Ridgewood Fire Chief John Judge; and Police Chief Forest Lyons. Ms. Brogan also thanked all past members of Age Friendly Ridgewood, including Claudia Botz, Joan Larkin, Don Liebreich, Eugene Thomas, and Helen Leonard, for setting the groundwork for the committee to make Ridgewood a great community for older adults. She also thanked AARP for their support. There was another round of applause.

6. PRESENTATION – MASTER PLAN PARKS AMENITY ANALYSIS – COLE DUSCHANG

Councilmember Winograd stated that she is an alumna of Lafayette College, and Cole Duschang, a sophomore at Lafayette College, did an internship earlier this year and came back to intern for the summer. Mr. Duschang said that he lives in Wyckoff. He has been working over the past couple of months developing an inventory of Ridgewood’s park system and its recreational amenities, along with Henry Walsh, Travis Jeong and Alexander Fiol, who are all seniors at Ridgewood High School.

Mr. Duschang said that in 2023, the Parks, Recreation and Conservation (PRC) Board initiated an inventory of the park system in the Village, and the amenities the parks offer. The PRC Board developed a database format for 6 of the 12 parks in Ridgewood, but time constraints prevented the completion of the project. In the Spring of 2024, Councilmember Winograd recruited the four interns to complete the park inventory, using the format developed by the PRC Board.

The main purpose of this park inventory database is to provide Ridgewood residents, staff and Village Council with reference information regarding Village parks, so that capital needs can be identified and priorities established for park improvements, such as additional playgrounds, shade areas, bench maintenance and restroom facilities. The ultimate goal is to create interactive pages on the Village website, in order to educate the public about the amenities offered in Ridgewood, such as walking trails, hiking trails, athletic fields, playgrounds, restrooms, and biking paths.

Mr. Duschang then reviewed the survey done on Twinney Pond and the survey of the six parks done by the PRC Board, before the interns started work on this project. Both Mr. Duschang and Mr. Jeong created a rough draft of how they envision the interactive pages on the Village website to look. The home page would list all 12 parks, along with a photograph of each park and a dropdown menu so that residents may search for certain amenities. Individual park pages will include a link to the address of the park, an outline of the park and surrounding area (including entrances and exits, amenities offered, and parking lots), a brief description and history of the park, and any upcoming events which will be held at the park.

Mr. Duschang indicated that he and Jim Morgan brainstormed and came up with an idea for a photography contest. This would create public awareness of local parks and would provide new photographs for the Village website throughout the year. The PRC Board, Ridgewood Arts Council and Village Council will be soliciting photographs of all of the Village Parks. The contest will spotlight local talent on the Village website. The intern team will meet on July 31, 2024 to discuss steps to complete and finish the project in a database format. Their goal is to have the interactive pages on the website completed by the Fall of 2024. Mr. Duschang is also taking on the additional project of benchmarking a fee structure within Village parks.

Mayor Vagianos thanked all four interns for their comprehensive presentation, and stated that the pages on the Village website will benefit all residents. He also thanked Councilmember Winograd and Jim Morgan for assisting the four interns.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked if the park inventory will cover tennis courts in the Village. Mr. Duschang said that he was not sure, but the project could possibly be expanded to include tennis courts in the Village, as well. Councilmember Reynolds thanked everyone and said that the information gathered by the interns will be valuable for both residents and people from out of town. Councilmember Weitz echoed Councilmember Reynolds' comments and thanked the interns, on behalf of the entire Village.

Councilmember Winograd thanked the interns for their hard work, as well as the Parks and Recreation Department and the PRC Board for supporting the interns throughout this project. She said that the completed inventory will aid the Village Council in making budget decisions regarding the parks in Ridgewood. There was a resounding round of applause.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – GREEN ACRES DIVERSION – MAPLE AND GRAYDON PARKS – 259 NORTH MAPLE AVENUE AND 200 NORTHERN PARKWAY

A. EXPLANATION OF PUBLIC HEARING – RICHARD CALBI, DIRECTOR OF RIDGEWOOD WATER

Richard Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, introduced Chris Colley from Topology, which has been heading up this project for Ridgewood Water. Mr. Calbi explained that the Public Hearing this evening is the third and final hearing regarding this project. The Public Hearing will be recorded this evening by a court reporter, and a copy of the transcript will be sent to the State of New Jersey. Mr. Calbi said that Ridgewood Water has been working on increasing the water supply mechanism in the system for many years. In 2019, a replacement well was drilled for the Linwood Well, located by the Graydon Pool parking lot. There is a Green Acres diversion related to this small improvement in the park, relative to the well itself and the underground piping that will connect it to the water distribution system. The Village Council approved a temporary agreement prior to this evening, so work has begun for the hookup of the well to the distribution system.

Mr. Colley said that he is a consultant for Ridgewood Water and the Public Hearing this evening is statutorily required by the State. He said that the diversion to be discussed this evening is made up of two components. One is classified as a major diversion, and one is classified as a minor diversion. The diversion is located on the boundary of Graydon and Maple Parks. The original scoping hearing took place in March of 2022, and then application materials were sent to the State. After this evening's Public Hearing, this matter will then be sent to the State House Commission for review. The major diversion consists of the above-ground construction of the well (64 square feet), and the minor diversion consists of related subsurface infrastructure related to the well (underground piping to connect the new well to the existing wellhouse, consisting of 1,311 square feet). Mr. Colley described the pictures shown on the screen showing the fencing surrounding the wellhouse, the areas comprising both the major and minor diversions, and the survey performed, which was required by the State.

Mr. Colley explained that one of the requirements under State statute is that a diversion must serve a public need. This improvement will improve the quality of water distribution in the Village. Access to quality drinking water, in an adequate supply, is a vital public need. There is also a compensation requirement required under the statute. The sum of \$6,800.00 is to be paid to the Garden State Preservation Trust (GSPT) for the minor diversion, and the sum of \$10,000.00 is to be paid to the GSPT for the major diversion. Contrary to what was originally planned, there will be no tree removal or loss of recreational facilities in order to complete the subsurface easement and, therefore, no compensation is required in this regard. Residents have until July 31, 2024 to submit any written comments regarding this project to Ridgewood Water,

with a copy of the comments sent to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), Public Land Compliance, at njdep.nj.gov.

B. PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Vagianos stated that the Public Hearing this evening is a required part of the Green Acres diversion process. The Public Hearing is specifically on the Village’s proposal to legalize the after-the-fact diversion, as well as the additional subsurface diversion, and the Village Council will only listen to comments from the public specifically on these two Green Acres diversions. Mayor Vagianos then moved that the Public Hearing be opened, seconded by Deputy Mayor Perron.

Roll Call Vote

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

Boyd A. Loving, 342 South Irving Street, stated that there is 1,400 square feet of parkland that is now going to become the property of Ridgewood Water and the Village is paying money in lieu of having to replace this land with land from another source. He asked if this assumption was correct, and Mr. Calbi indicated that this was accurate. Mr. Colley clarified that the 1,311 square feet for the minor diversion represents a subsurface easement; therefore, utilization of the area above ground will not be affected by the subsurface easement.

Since there were no further comments from the public, Mayor Vagianos moved that the Public Hearing be closed, seconded by Deputy Mayor Perron.

Roll Call Vote

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

Deputy Mayor Perron recalled that there was recent legislation passed that would obviate “tension” between the public interest and Green Acres. She also recalled that Ridgewood Water advocated for such legislation. Mr. Calbi said that this new legislation does not affect this particular site; however, this legislation has been used on other sites successfully. Ridgewood Water attempted to apply the new legislation to the Graydon Park/Maple Park site, but the NJDEP felt that it did not apply because it did not pertain to the existing Linwood Well (a new

well had already been drilled). Councilmember Winograd and Mayor Vagianos thanked Mr. Calbi and Mr. Colley for their comprehensive presentation.

8. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Tony Damiano, 274 South Broad Street, stated that the Central Business District (CBD) looks particularly beautiful this summer. He thanked Councilmember Reynolds and the Project Pride Committee. Mr. Damiano said that he was very pleased that the side streets in the CBD have finally been paved, particularly Chestnut Street and Oak Street.

Mr. Damiano said that he reported only 12 vacancies in the CBD in January of this year; however, that number has escalated to 23 vacancies at the current time. Femmebot, Ridgewood Cleaners and Gardiner & Co. are among the businesses that have recently left Ridgewood. He said that the CBD is, once again, not experiencing a good summer. Mr. Damiano said some of the reasons had to do with online shopping and the recent hot weather. He stated that parking meters, in the past, ran from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.. However, the times were changed a couple of years ago from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mr. Damiano said that he is not in agreement with these new hours for the parking meters. He said that the Village really needs to be more customer friendly and urged the Village Council to reconsider changing the times for the parking meters back to 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Damiano stated that he was approached by a digital marketing group called Placer, which asked if he would be interested in doing a demographic study on any topic, perhaps special events. He asked this group to do demographic studies around Memorial Park at Van Neste Square, since the Ridgewood Guild, the Chamber of Commerce and the Village all host events in the park. This group did this work pro bono. Mr. Damiano said that a representative from Placer will reach out to Mr. Kazmark next week, to see if the Village would like them to do any demographic studies.

Regarding the Memorial Park at Van Neste Square study, which ran from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, Mr. Damiano said that the demographic information is gleaned from GPS data from personal cell phones. The study is based on a two-minute or longer stay in a particular area, such as Memorial Park at Van Neste Square. Using this information, Placer can gauge how many people enter and exit the park. He said that 30,000 people visited on Saturdays during 2024; 75,300 visits were made overall; and 121,400 people visited the park frequently. The majority of people visiting Memorial Park at Van Neste Square are from Ridgewood, and the next highest number of people visiting the park were from Fair Lawn. This was followed by visitors from Glen Rock, Wyckoff, Paramus, Mahwah, Hawthorne, Saddle River, Waldwick and Franklin Lakes. He was surprised that people from Ho-Ho-Kus and Midland Park were not high up on this list.

Before entering the park for an event, Mr. Damiano said that people frequented Raymond's Restaurant, The Daily Treat, Chick-Fil-A (on Route 17), the Office, Bare Burger, Starbucks, Paris

Baguette, Wendy's, Sook Pastry, McDonald's and Felina. Mr. Damiano noticed that Park West Tavern and Steel Wheel Tavern were not on this list.

Councilmember Weitz said that the information being presented by Mr. Damiano was fantastic, but since it is lengthy, it may be better in the future to present the information during an actual presentation before the Village Council, since then Mr. Damiano would not be limited to only three minutes during public comments. Councilmember Winograd asked if there could be a motion to add a presentation to this evening's agenda, once public comments have concluded, and Mr. Rogers replied in the affirmative. It was decided that Mr. Damiano would report additional information on the Placer study once public comments have concluded.

Anne Loving, 342 South Irving Street, said that she did not understand why public comments are being pushed back to later times during Village Council meetings. She understood why it was done at the meeting during which the soil testing on the Schedler property was being presented, since it was felt that the presentation given beforehand would circumvent many questions from the public. However, this evening, there were three presentations this evening before public comments were reached, resulting in members of the public having to wait around to make comments until the presentations were completed. Ms. Loving said that there are some members of the public who don't wish to hear the presentations or who can't wait around for that long, since they have children at home. Ms. Loving feels that delaying the time for public comments is not good for the public and stated that Councilmember Reynolds advocated for public comments to remain at an earlier time during meetings.

Cynthia O'Keefe, 542 West Saddle River Road, said that she also does not agree with pushing public comments to a later time at Village Council meetings. She feels that this is exclusionary for some residents, coupled with the fact that the ending public comments portion has been reduced from five minutes per person to three minutes per person. Having public comments come after presentations excludes a population of people who may wish to speak, particularly people with young children. She agreed that it was prudent to have the Matrix presentation come before public comments at a prior meeting, but feels that this should be the exception and not the norm.

There were no further public comments.

Ms. Mailander explained the order of business for this evening's agenda. The presentation by the AARP representative came before public comments, so that the representative could give his presentation and leave the meeting afterwards, so that he could attend to other business. The second presentation, given by Cole Duschang, was placed on the agenda before public comments because he is a college student and could not attend any other meeting this summer before returning to school. The Public Hearing regarding the diversion was placed on the agenda before public comments because the Village was paying Mr. Colley and the court reporter to be present at the meeting. They were being paid from the moment they walked into the courtroom until the time they

left; therefore, it was prudent to have the Public Hearing before public comments, so that the Village could save money. Ms. Mailander explained that sometimes it is important to have certain matters take place at meetings before public comments, although it will not be a regular occurrence.

Mayor Vagianos added that the Village Councilmembers have no input as to the order of business. Ms. Mailander has been developing agendas for 35 years, and the Village Councilmembers trust her to make the agenda as streamlined as possible. Councilmember Weitz agreed with the order of business listed on this evening's agenda and thought it made a lot of sense. Councilmember Winograd said that one of the primary reasons why hybrid access was re-established was because of parents with young families. Hybrid access allows these parents to phone in from the comfort of their home and not have to worry about childcare.

There were no further comments from the public.

Councilmember Weitz made a motion to amend this evening's agenda to include a special presentation by Tony Damiano of the Ridgewood Guild, seconded by Councilmember Winograd.

Roll Call Vote

AYES: Councilmembers Perron, Reynolds, Weitz, Winograd, and Mayor Vagianos

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Mr. Damiano stated that the study by Placer cost \$14,000.00. He said that the Village could consider doing a demographic study next year. Placer can do studies at the Train Station or in the CBD. Other towns using Placer for such studies include Madison, Summit, Bernardsville and Montclair. At Councilmember Winograd's request, Mr. Damiano agreed to send the Village Councilmembers the information he has regarding the Placer organization. She indicated that it may even be beneficial for representatives from Placer to make a presentation before the Village Council. Mr. Damiano said that the study revealed that the most street traffic in the CBD was seen in the month of September, when both the annual Street Fair and Music Festival are held. Pedestrian traffic is also increased during December, when Downtown for the Holidays is held.

Mr. Damiano stated that there will be a Chamber of Commerce meeting in September to discuss the feasibility of transforming the former Warner Theater into a performing arts center. Last week, 15 people met at the theater, including members of the Ridgewood Arts Foundation, a local architect, and the realtor who is handling the sale of the building. However, the owners are no longer interested in selling the building, but rather are interested in leasing the property. So far, there are about 30 people who will be attending the meeting in September. The Chamber of Commerce is seeking investors, donors, grant writers, and people to do fundraising. They are working on possibly hosting a black-and-white ball at Felina in 2025, to raise money for the performing arts center.

Mr. Damiano said that he did not anticipate the public response when he put a post on social media announcing that the Warner Theater was closing. Mr. Damiano is meeting with Mr. Kazmark next week to discuss the possibility of holding the September meeting in the Village Hall courtroom, since it is equipped with microphones and screens. Councilmember Weitz advocated for allowing the Chamber of Commerce to hold their meeting in the courtroom, and Mr. Kazmark agreed. Mayor Vagianos thanked Mr. Damiano for his tireless efforts in making the CBD a vibrant area to shop and dine. He said that transforming the theater into a performing arts center would change the direction of the CBD.

Mr. Damiano said that they are looking into making the theater a multifunctional building, possibly an 800-seat performing arts center on the main level, a small movie theater upstairs with 200 seats where birthday parties and special events such as a classic film night or foreign film night could be held, and an open space where the third theater area is, to be used for dance recitals, chamber concerts, and art exhibits. Mr. Damiano composed a list of 17 organizations, bands, and symphonies that exist in Ridgewood that may be interested in using the space.

9. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kazmark reported that, today, he and Carol Bialkowski, Director of Communications and Special Projects, met with representatives from the New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT), together with Connolly & Hickey, historical architects, at the pedestrian tunnel by the train station. The NJHT conducts site visits for each grant application received. The NJHT will give an answer regarding the grant applications by late September.

Mr. Kazmark said that he and the group working on changes to Village ordinances met yesterday and reviewed the recommendations made by the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) in their annual report. The recommendations will be sent back to the ZBA for further clarification, especially concerning circular driveways and front yard fences. Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney, will confer with Bruce Whittaker, attorney for the ZBA, regarding these issues. The group also reviewed the ordinance which is required to establish the three Special Law Enforcement Officer III positions in the Police Department, who will be assigned to work in Village schools. This ordinance, together with a Shared Services Agreement with the Board of Education, will be on the agenda for consideration at the Village Council Work Session scheduled for August 7, 2024. They also discussed a Certificate of Occupancy ordinance which will slightly modify the current procedure in the Building Department, with recommendations by John Barre, Village Planner, and Tony Merlino, Construction Code Official. This ordinance will also be reviewed at the Work Session on August 7, 2024. The revised tree ordinance is being sent to the Shade Tree Commission for one final review, and recommendations regarding same will be considered around Labor Day.

Mr. Kazmark said that he spoke with a representative from Matrix New World Engineering yesterday, regarding the soil testing results report on the Schedler property. Matrix has not yet received all of the lab reports as of this date. However, this evening, the Village Councilmembers will consider Resolution #24-233 which will retain Matrix for Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP) services regarding the Schedler property. The soil testing results and LSRP recommendations will be discussed at the August 7, 2024 meeting.

Tomorrow, Ridgewood Water will be receiving an award from Commissioner Shawn LaTourette of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for its efforts over the years to conserve water and to protect public health by addressing PFAS contamination. It is the NJDEP's first "Our Water's Worth It" award ever presented to a water utility. Presentation of the award will be made at 1:00 p.m. tomorrow at the Water Pollution Control Facility, off of Prospect Street, in Glen Rock. Mr. Kazmark publicly congratulated Mr. Calbi and his team for all of their hard work regarding the PFAS treatment facilities, replacing lead service lines (both commercial and residential) in all four service areas (Ridgewood, Glen Rock, Wyckoff and Midland Park), and enforcing water conservation during the summer months.

The Ridgewood Guild continues to hold "Music in the Night" on Friday evenings in the CBD, through Labor Day. The Ridgewood Guild is also sponsoring free "Movies in the Park" on Wednesday nights at 9:00 p.m. in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square. On July 25, 2024, "Mary Poppins" will be shown, and on August 7, 2024, "Batman" will be shown. In addition, the Ridgewood Guild will be sponsoring "Art in the Park" on August 2, 2024, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

"Music in the Park," sponsored by Destination Ridgewood, is held every Saturday evening from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in Memorial Park at Van Neste Square. On July 20, 2024, "The Leftovers" will perform, and on July 27, 2024, "Jam" will perform.

The concert series at the Kasschau Memorial Shell on Veterans Field continues, with performances each Tuesday and Thursday evening, beginning at 8:30 p.m., through the end of August.

The Parks and Recreation Department and the Open Space Committee are jointly sponsoring Park Walks during the month of July. The next Park Walk will take place in Grove Park on Saturday, July 13, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Each Sunday, the Chamber of Commerce holds its annual Farmers Market through October 29, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., on the west side, by the train station parking lot.

Mr. Kazmark stated that this is the first year, in a very long time, that the Village will not need to send out estimated tax bills. Actual tax bills will be sent out shortly. Property taxes will be due

on August 1, 2024; however, there is a grace period that extends until August 26, 2024. If payments are not received by August 26, 2024, then the interest rate will revert back to August 1, 2024.

Mr. Kazmark stated that upcoming Village Council meetings are scheduled as follows: Work Sessions on August 7 and September 4, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., and a Public Meeting on August 14, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Vagianos asked how much money the Village will save by only having to send out actual tax bills, rather than estimated tax bills, followed by the actual tax bills. Mr. Kazmark replied that only having to send out one mailing will save \$5,000.00 for the Village, for postage, printing, and preparation.

10. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Weitz thanked Councilmember Winograd for covering for him during the Board of Education meeting, while he was away on vacation. He congratulated and thanked the Fourth of July Committee, especially Tara Masterson, for doing a fantastic job organizing the Fourth of July activities.

Councilmember Winograd reported that Ines Bunza, longstanding member and Chair of the Access Committee, passed away last week. There will be services held on Saturday. The Access Committee took a field trip to the Zabriskie-Schedler house to explore whether or not this space could be used in the future, for events and meetings for the neurodivergent community. Robert Rooney, Village Chief Financial Officer, accompanied Councilmember Winograd and others on this field trip to discuss what type of revenue could be generated from the house. She thanked everyone who attended the field trip. There was another field trip scheduled to the Friends to Friends Church, which was recently renovated. All of the pews have been removed, and there is now available space where events can be held.

Councilmember Winograd stated that she attended the recent Board of Education (BOE) meeting and covered for Councilmember Weitz. The renovation of the tennis courts, which are in bad shape and are governed under the Fields Policy as a shared asset, is moving forward. There was a discussion at the meeting about the condition of the athletic fields and the meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as the three Special Law Enforcement Officer IIIs who will be assigned to Village schools. These open positions are currently being advertised by the Police Department. They also discussed some partnerships with Green Ridgewood and rain barrels, and there was some discussion regarding Shared Services.

The Shade Tree Commission met today, and Councilmember Winograd announced that there are 200 trees which will be planted in residential areas. She said that they are developing educational

materials for the public on how to care for trees, particularly newly planted trees. She reminded all residents who adopted trees to fill the gator bags during the hot summer weather.

Councilmember Winograd announced that the “Rain Barrel Commission” was launched today. Members from Green Ridgewood, the Shade Tree Commission, and the Parks and Recreation Department are exploring ways in which rain barrels can be put to use in the Village. Councilmember Reynolds stated that she agrees that rain barrels would be very useful in the Village to mitigate flooding. She personally has two rain barrels at her home, and she was surprised that a 10-minute rainstorm literally filled up both barrels. She encouraged all residents to think about utilizing rain barrels to capture rainwater and using the water to water lawns and plants.

Councilmember Reynolds reported that sidewalk construction has begun on East Glen Avenue (between Maple Avenue and the train trestle). She appreciates the cooperation of residents while this construction is being performed. Councilmember Reynolds stated that she spoke to one of the engineers from the Engineering Department who was mapping out the sidewalks to be constructed on Clinton Avenue. She expressed the hope that the Clinton Avenue sidewalks will be constructed before the end of the summer.

Deputy Mayor Perron reported that the Park Walk at Grove Park took place last Saturday. The next Park Walk is scheduled for July 27, 2024 at Graydon Park. The meeting place is at the bridge entrance to Graydon Pool, at 10:00 a.m. The walk will be led by Fran Barto, Planning Board representative on the Open Space Committee. All Park Walks are free.

Mayor Vagianos stated that he had nothing new to report, since all of his committees have recessed for the summer.

11. ORDINANCES – RIDGEWOOD WATER

Ms. Mailander stated that there were no ordinances for introduction, public hearings or resolutions for Ridgewood Water for the Village Council to consider this evening, and no regular ordinances for introduction or public hearing to be considered this evening.

12. RESOLUTIONS

Ms. Mailander stated that the following resolutions, numbered 24-227 through 24-247, are to be adopted by a Consent Agenda, with one vote by the Village Council, and would be read by title only:

Ms. Mailander stated that the following resolution, numbered 24-248, will be considered separately and read in full:

13. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Boyd A. Loving, 342 South Irving Street, said that if residents pay their taxes online by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or credit card on the Village website, they can do so at this time and do not have to wait for the tax bill to be received via regular mail. This will be convenient for residents who will be away on vacation when taxes are due.

Anne Loving, 342 South Irving Street, said that the report given by Tony Damiano this evening was fascinating and very interesting. She remarked how remarkable, yet frightening, cell phone data accessibility and dissemination can be for individuals.

Ms. Loving cautioned the Village Council on allowing “walk-on agenda items,” such as the presentation given this evening by Mr. Damiano. However, she agreed with the Village Council allowing Mr. Damiano to give his report after public comments. Ms. Loving said that it was her understanding that the Village Councilmembers are no longer considering officially changing the order of public comments on the agenda for Village Council meetings, although the order of business at meetings may be changed under certain circumstances. Ms. Loving said that she is a huge fan of hybrid access and is glad that the current Village Council reinstated it. However, Ms. Loving said that it was not easy for a resident to utilize hybrid access with small children at home, especially when residents have no idea when public comments are going to occur during a meeting. This is one reason why public comments, in general, need to remain constant as an agenda item.

There were no further public comments.

Mayor Vagianos asked Mr. Kazmark how the issue of public comments on the agenda was left at the last meeting. Councilmember Winograd said that, if this were a matter for discussion, it would have appeared on the agenda this evening for a vote. She decided not to sponsor the idea of changing the order of business on Village Council agendas going forward. Mr. Kazmark said that it was decided by the Village Councilmembers to leave the order of the agenda items up to the discretion of Ms. Mailander, who has developed agendas for over 35 years. During a meeting, if an issue arises that is more prevalent than other issues, then a majority vote of the Village Councilmembers will allow that matter to be placed on the agenda before other agenda items, such as was seen this evening. There was further discussion about placing important items before public comment, such as the presentation given by Matrix New World Engineering at a prior meeting, so that the public can become educated about a topic before making public comments.

Councilmember Winograd said that she initially presented the idea of changing the order of business at Village Council meetings so that the Village Council would be afforded more flexibility, since the relevant ordinance pre-establishes the order of business. She stated that she

was under the impression that the ordinance would have to be amended in order for agenda items to be moved around. Mr. Kazmark stated that the sequence of events at a meeting only applies to Public Meetings, such as the meeting held this evening. However, in his experience, he has seen governing bodies make a motion to suspend the regular order of business, to supplement agenda items, because of certain circumstances that exist at a meeting.

Mr. Rogers agreed with Mr. Kazmark's statements. A clause could be added to the existing ordinance allowing for discretion of the Village Councilmembers to adjust the order of business during meetings. The ordinance does not have to be amended for the Village Councilmembers to do so, but it can be done with a majority vote by the Village Councilmembers. Mayor Vagianos said that he was confident the Village Councilmembers would only change the order of agenda items under extraordinary circumstances.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Councilmember Weitz, seconded by Councilmember Reynolds, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council's Regular Public Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Paul Vagianos
Mayor

Heather A. Mailander
Village Clerk