

*Minutes of the 1907<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of April 3, 2024*

**CALLED TO ORDER:**

Mayor Sarlo called the Borough of Wood-Ridge Council meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** was led by Councilperson Azzolini

**ROLL CALL:**

Mayor:	Paul Sarlo – present
Council:	Ezio Altamura – present by telephone
	Dominick Azzolini – present
	Philip Romero – present
	Michele A. Mabel – present
	Michael Donato – present
Borough Attorney:	Paul Barbire – present by telephone
Borough Engineer:	Brian Intindola – excused
Borough Clerk:	Gina Affuso – present by telephone
Borough Administrator:	Chris Eilert – present

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT:**

This meeting is being held in accordance with Public Law 1975 Chapter 231, the Open Public Meetings Act, also known as the “Sunshine Law”. The public meeting notice stating the date, time and place of this meeting was posted on the town bulletin board and the town website and was forwarded to the Record and the Star Ledger.

Mayor Sarlo read a letter from Councilperson Marino who resigned from Council effective April 2, 2024. Mayor Sarlo praised Councilman Marino’s service to the Community on the Borough Council and as a volunteer in various Wood-Ridge recreation programs, including Basketball and Soccer, and in many Wood-Ridge High School programs such as the Athletic Boosters.

**CEREMONIAL PRESENTATIONS:**

None

**ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING:**

None

**ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING AND FINAL PASSAGE:**

None

**ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING:**

**ORDINANCE NO: 2024-7**

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF REAL ESTATE KNOWN AS BLOCK 290; LOT 1 ON THE WOOD-RIDGE TAX MAP AND FURTHER IDENTIFIED AS 288 HIGHLAND AVENUE, WOOD-RIDGE, NJ PURSUANT TO THE LOCAL LANDS AND BUILDINGS LAW N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1, et seq.**

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Wood-Ridge, in furtherance of its redevelopment plans to expand and renovate the Doyle Elementary School, has identified the adjacent property known as Block 290, Lot 1, and further identified as 288 Highland Avenue, Wood-Ridge, NJ, as a site appropriate for these purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to advance these plans, the acquisition of the aforesaid land is necessary; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of the acquisition of the aforesaid property is \$475,000.00; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Wood-Ridge deems it to be in the best interest of the citizens and tax payers, of the Borough, to acquire the aforesaid property at the designated costs,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF WOOD-RIDGE, COUNTY OF BERGEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Mayor Paul A. Sarlo and Christopher W. Eilert, Business Administrator are hereby authorized to enter into a Real Estate Contract for the purchase of real estate, known as Block 290, Lot 1, on the Borough of Wood-Ridge Tax Map, commonly known as 288 Highland Avenue, Wood-Ridge, NJ, at a price of \$475,000.00.

2. Mayor Paul A. Sarlo and Christopher W. Eilert, Business Administrator are hereby authorized, to enter into said Contract subject to the approval of Wood-Ridge Special Counsel, Gerald R. Salerno, Esq. for the purchase of said realty, at a cost of \$475,000.00 subject to the availability of monies, by the Borough of Wood-Ridge in an amount sufficient to acquire title to the premises.

3. Mayor Paul A. Sarlo and Business Administrator, Christopher W. Eilert, together with Special Counsel, Gerald R. Salerno, Esq. are hereby authorized to close title on the premises and execute such closing documents and instruments as may be necessary for the Borough to obtain title to the above referenced property.

4. The Borough of Wood-Ridge deems it to be in the interest of the citizens and taxpayers of the Borough of Wood-Ridge to acquire title to the property, to advance plans for redevelopment and expansion and renovation of the Doyle Elementary School and

5. All ordinances or parts of ordinances which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

6. This Ordinance shall take effect upon final adoption and publication as provided by law.

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**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-8**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 530, ENTITLED ZONING**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, County of Bergen, New Jersey, as follows:

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 530, entitled Zoning, is hereby amended as follows:

1. Under Section B of Chapter 530-4, entitled Word usage; definitions, the following definitions are hereby added to the existing list:

**Commercial Use** – Any nonresidential use

**Nonresidential Use** – All uses of a building that are not residential uses

**Residential Use** – The use of a building as a dwelling

2. Section G of Chapter 530-32, entitled Walls and fences, is replaced in its entirety with the following:

G. Any wall or fence erected on any corner lot shall comply with all provisions of this Chapter and subchapter and with the following additional provisions:

- (1) One of the two lot lines that fronts on a street shall be designated as the front lot line for the purpose of establishing the lot's front yard and a wall or fence shall not be erected in the front yard except if specifically permitted by the provisions of this subchapter entitled walls and fences.
- (2) A wall or fence may be erected on the second lot line that fronts on a street, that is not designated as the front lot line, provided that said lot line is not adjacent to the front yard of the adjoining lot. If said lot line is adjacent to the front yard of the adjoining lot, then any wall or fence erected may not be closer than 12 feet to the subject's second lot line that fronts on a street.

3. Section A of Chapter 530-86, entitled Zoning Officer designated, is replaced in its entirety with the following:

A. The Zoning Officer of the Borough of Wood-Ridge and any Deputy, Assistant, or Special Assistant Zoning Officers, respectively, are hereby designated and authorized by the Mayor and Borough Council to administer and enforce all the provisions of this chapter.

4. Under Chapter 530-86, entitled Zoning Officer designated, the following new section is hereby established:

D. All members of the Borough Police Department, licensed officials and inspectors and certified technical assistants of the Borough Construction Code Office, licensed officials and inspectors of the Fire Prevention Bureau, all Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Officers including all Deputies or Assistants thereof, and the Borough Engineer, respectively, are hereby designated as Special Assistant Zoning Officers for the purposes of assisting the Zoning Officer and enforcing the provisions of this chapter, pursuant to the

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supervision and direction of the Zoning Officer.

**SECTION 2.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 3.** If any subchapter, section, subsection, part, provision, or the total of any of the abovementioned publications are held to be invalid or unenforceable by any court, the findings or judgments of which court are applicable in the State of New Jersey, that the balance and remainder of such publication shall remain in full force and effect as an Ordinance of the Borough of Wood-Ridge.

**SECTION 4.** This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption and publication according to law.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge that **Ordinance No. 2024-7 and 2024-8** as above, be passed on first reading, to be published in the Record on **April 8, 2024** and public hearing on the Ordinance to be held at the Regular Meeting on **April 17, 2024** at 7:00 p.m. or soon thereafter as the matter can be reached, in the Municipal Building, 85 Humboldt Street, Wood-Ridge, New Jersey.

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Motion: Councilperson Azzolini, seconded by Donato moved to the adoption of **Ordinance No. 2024-7 and 2024-8**

Discussion: Administrator Eilert explained the borough is purchasing a piece of property which must be done by ordinance. The zoning ordinance is more changes that we have been doing to update our zoning codes and to increase our enforcement efforts.

Roll Call: Altamura yes, Azzolini yes, Romero yes, Mabel yes, Donato yes

**PETITIONS:**

None

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Communications and correspondence received are identified on this evening's agenda has been distributed to all Council for appropriate action.

- Councilman Edward Marino resigning as a Councilmember effective April 2, 2024

**REPORTS OF GOVERNING BODY:**

Chairs of Council Committees and Council Liaisons to Boards, Commissions, Committees & Constituencies

Council President Ezio Altamura:

No report

Councilperson Dominick Azzolini:

No report

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### Councilperson Philip Romero:

Fire Department - During the month of March 2024, the Wood-Ridge Fire Department had 461 hours of service, 31 alarms and 10 mutual aid. Another great job by the Fire Department. Chief Cribben was present in the audience this evening.

### Councilperson Mabel:

No report

### Councilperson Michael Donato:

No report

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS:**

Administrator Eilert: The Municipal Budget will be introduced at the April 17, 2024 meeting.

Borough Clerk Affuso: no report

Attorney Barbire: no report

Engineer Neglia: on file

**REPORTS OF DEPARTMENTS:** If any, on file in clerk's office

## **FIRST HEARING OF CITIZENS:**

Mayor Sarlo declared the Hearing of Citizens to be open. With no citizens wishing to be heard, the hearing of citizens was closed.

## **ITEMS VOTED SEPARATELY:**

- a. Off-Premise 50/50 for the Wood-Ridge Little League, May 1, 2024 at the Little League Field, 61 Sixth Street, Wood-Ridge.

Councilperson Romero requested a separate roll call for Item a. under Applications

Motion: Councilperson Donato, seconded by Mabel moved to the adoption of application A.

Roll Call: Altamura yes, Azzolini yes, Romero abstain, Mabel yes, Donato yes

## **CONSENT AGENDA:**

All matters listed below are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by Council, that particular item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

## **MINUTES:**

Minutes of the March 20, 2024 Meeting.

**RESOLUTIONS:** Adoption of the following

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A PURCHASE  
AND SALE AGREEMENT FOR THE  
ACQUISITION OF 288 HIGHLAND AVENUE**

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Wood-Ridge, in furtherance of its plans to expand and renovate the Doyle Elementary School, is desirous of purchasing the adjacent property known as Block 290, Lot 1, and further identified as 288 Highland Avenue, Wood-Ridge, NJ for a purchase price of \$475,000.00; and

**WHEREAS**, funds are available to make said purchase; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey that the Borough is hereby authorized to enter into a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the purchase of property located at 288 Highland Avenue in the Borough of Wood-Ridge; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Borough Administrator, Mayor and Municipal Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the Purchase and Sale Agreement and any and all instruments relating thereto as approved by Gerald R. Salerno, Special Counsel to the Borough; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Gerald R. Salerno as special counsel to the Borough in connection with the purchase is hereby authorized to proceed with due diligence and order a title search and survey and take any other steps necessary to complete the purchase pending the passage of the appropriate ordinances.

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**RESOLUTION NO.: 068-2024  
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 100% DISABLED VETERAN ADJUSTMENT ON BLOCK 274,  
LOT 3**

**WHEREAS THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL** of the Borough of Wood-Ridge have been informed by the Tax Collector of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, that Sydney Mohr of 440 Wood Ridge Avenue, Block 274 Lot 3 has filed an application for a **100% Disabled Veteran** deduction thru the Tax Assessor's Office for the year **2024**; and

**WHEREAS** the Tax Assessor has certified to the Mayor and Council that taxes should be canceled and refunded from 2/2/2024:

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to cancel taxes for Block 274 Lot 3 for the prorated portion of property taxes in 2024 based upon the letter from VA dated 11/30/2023 in the amount of \$2,854.41 for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2024 and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> will be cancelled for Sydney Mohr, and the book and records of the Tax Collector will so be marked, as required by law.

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**RESOLUTION NO.: 069 - 2024  
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SPECIAL COUNSEL TO INSTITUTE ACTION SEEKING  
ENFORCEMENT OF WOOD-RIDGE ZONING CODE**

**WHEREAS**, on March 26, 2024, the Borough Zoning Officer of the Borough of Wood-Ridge issued certain violations and penalties of the Borough Zoning Code to the owner related to the use of the residential

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property located at 111 Tenth Street, Block 232 Lot 3, in the Borough of Wood-Ridge for commercial filming purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the violations and penalties authorized by the Borough Code for violations of the Zoning Ordinances, Chapter 530-90 of the Borough Code permits the Borough Council to authorize the Borough Attorney to institute an action to enjoin, or any other appropriate action to prevent, such unlawful use; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council has determined that the continued unlawful commercial use of any property in a residential zone in the Borough is inimical to the welfare of the residents of the Borough of Wood-Ridge and that all appropriate actions must be undertaken to enjoin any further unlawful use.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, County of Bergen, and State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The law firm of Aronsohn, Weiner, Salerno, and Kaufman as Special Counsel to the Borough of Wood-Ridge is hereby authorized to prepare and institute an action to enjoin, or any other appropriate action to prevent the unlawful use of the property located at 111 Tenth Street, Block 232 Lot 3, in the Borough of Wood-Ridge
2. Counsel is authorized to take such actions as may be appropriate to further both the preparation, filing, service and litigation of such Action to completion, including any appeals and efforts to enforce judgments.
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

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**APPLICATIONS:**

- b. Application for handicap parking space at 183 Valley Boulevard, Apartment A.
- c. Application for handicap parking space at 325 Sussex Road.
- d. Application from Moumouni Dawoko for a Limousine Permit, 2017 Lexus located at 300 Avalon Drive, Wood-Ridge.

All applications have been approved by the Wood-Ridge Police Department.

**APPOINTMENTS:**

None

**HIRINGS:**

None

**Motion:** Councilperson Donato, seconded by Mabel moved to the adoption of all matters on the above **CONSENT AGENDA.**

Roll Call: Altamura yes, Azzolini yes, Romero yes, Mabel yes, Donato yes

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Mayor Sarlo stated paving on Hackensack Street was held off because of the rain. Milling has been completed. The paving on Hackensack Street and around the Wood-Ridge High School facility will take place on Thursday and Friday while school is closed, and the portion of Hackensack Street between Moonachie Avenue and the Carlstadt border will be paved on Monday. In June, paving will be done on all of the streets that have been impacted with utility construction by Veolia Water and PSE&G east of Hackensack Street. Other sections of the Borough where Veolia and PSE&G is still working will be paved in July and August.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**SECOND HEARING OF CITIZENS:**

Faith from TAPinto asked how the vacant council seat will be filled. Mayor Sarlo and Administrator Eilert explained that a State Law called the Municipal Vacancy Law governs how a vacancy on the Borough Council is filled. The law requires that the replacement councilmember must be nominated by the Democratic Municipal Committee of Wood-Ridge because Councilmember Marino was elected as a Democrat. If he had been a Republican, then the Republican Municipal Committee would make the nomination. Under the law, Democratic Municipal Committee of Wood-Ridge must nominate three people from the Democratic Party to fill the vacancy and submit those names to the Borough Council. Then the Borough Council must choose one name from the three to serve the remainder of Councilperson Marino's term which expires on December 31, 2024. By law, the vacancy must be filled within 30 days of the vacancy occurring which means that it must be done at the April 17, 2024 council meeting.

With no other citizens wishing to be heard, the hearing of citizens was closed.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Since there was no further business to come before the Council, Councilperson Azzolini, seconded by Councilperson Donato, moved for adjournment. By unanimous vote of the members of the Council present, the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge held on April 3, 2024 was duly adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Affuso, RMC  
Borough Clerk