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COUNTY OF BERGEN
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024
COMMENCING AT 7:03 P.M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- GERMAINE M. ORTIZ, CHAIRWOMAN
- MARY J. AMOROSO, VICE CHAIRWOMAN
- DR. JOAN M. VOSS, CHAIR PRO TEMPORE
- THOMAS J. SULLIVAN
- STEVEN TANELLI
- TRACY SILNA ZUR
- RAFAEL MARTE

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

NONE

KIM O. FURBACHER, C.C.R., R.D.R.
P.O. BOX 213
ROCHELLE PARK, NEW JERSEY 07662-0213
201-336-6200

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ALSO PRESENT:

THOMAS J. DUCH, ESQUIRE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR/COUNTY COUNSEL

MATT TONZOLA, ESQUIRE
COUNSEL TO THE BOARD

LARA L. RODRIGUEZ
CLERK TO THE BOARD

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HEARING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

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1 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The meeting is
2 called to order at 7:03 p.m.

3 I ask that everyone please take a
4 moment to silence their phones.

5 Thank you.

6 Please note for the record, we are
7 joined at the table by Matt Tonzola of the Florio
8 Kenny Raval law firm.

9 Will the Clerk please read the Sen.
10 Byron Baer Open Public Meetings Act.

11 CLERK POLLITT: In accordance with
12 Section 5 of the Sen. Byron Baer Open Public Meetings
13 Act, adequate notice of this meeting has been
14 provided in the Annual Notice Schedule, which
15 contained the time, date, and location of this
16 meeting, copies of which Notices were forwarded to
17 the official County newspapers, to wit: The Herald
18 News and The Record, and a copy of which was posted
19 on the bulletin board in the Bergen County Justice
20 Center and Administration Building, One Bergen County
21 Plaza, Hackensack, New Jersey, and filed with the
22 Office of the Bergen County Clerk.

23 Roll Call

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk
25 please call the roll.

1 (At this point in the proceeding roll
2 call is taken with Commissioners Zur, Voss, Tanelli,
3 Sullivan, Marte, Vice Chairwoman Amoroso, and
4 Chairwoman Ortiz present.)

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Evidence of a quorum
6 is present.

7 Pledge of Allegiance

8 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Please join me for
9 the Pledge of Allegiance.

10 Commissioner Tanelli, would you like to
11 lead us?

12 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Thank you.
13 Please join me in honoring America.

14 (At this point in the proceeding all
15 rise for a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance,
16 led by Commissioner Tanelli.)

17 Moment of Silence

18 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Please remain
19 standing for a Moment of Silence.

20 We are deeply saddened to announce the
21 passing of Supervising Public Safety Telecommunicator
22 Erik Midgley, who dedicated over 25 years to public
23 service, including 19 with Bergen County
24 Communications.

25 Erik was a trusted leader, known for

1 his expertise in communications and analytics, and
2 his unwavering commitment to supporting our first
3 responders in Police, Fire, and EMS, and the
4 residents of Bergen County. He also served the
5 Ridgefield Police Department as a Special Police
6 Officer, and was a devoted member of the Palisades
7 Park and Fairview Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

8 Please keep Erik's family in your
9 thoughts and prayers as we honor his memory and
10 lasting impact on our community.

11 Next, I'd like to take a Moment of
12 Silence to honor the life of Dariel Vasquez, an
13 18-year-old Parks and Recreation aide with the New
14 York State Parks Department, who lost his life in the
15 line of duty while bravely battling the Jennings
16 Creek wildfire.

17 Dariel was a dedicated student, a
18 gifted athlete, and a true leader who touched many
19 lives with his kindness and strength.

20 We also keep in our hearts the
21 courageous first responders from our county who are
22 currently working tirelessly to contain the wildfires
23 threatening our community. Let us reflect in
24 gratitude for their sacrifices and pray for their
25 safety.

1 Thank you.

2 Hearing of the General Public

3 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I now move we open
4 the Commissioners Meeting to the General Public.

5 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Second.

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

7 (All present Commissioners respond in
8 the affirmative.)

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: We will now have the
10 Hearing of the General Public, with a three-minute
11 time limit in effect, in accordance with Bergen
12 County Commissioner Bylaws.

13 For those members of the public who
14 would like to participate during the public comment,
15 please fill out a sheet right here on the right to be
16 recognized (indicating).

17 Would the counselor please explain the
18 process by which the public will be recognized.

19 MR. TONZOLA: A member of the public
20 who is recognized to speak by the Chair will come up
21 to the podium. Prior to speaking, they will spell
22 their first and last name. After that, they will
23 have three minutes to speak.

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

25 We'll start with Ms. Amy Herbold.

1 MS. HERBOLD: Hi, everyone.

2 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Hi.

3 MS. HERBOLD: Happy Wednesday. I'm
4 here, there is --

5 MR. TONZOLA: Spell your first and last
6 name.

7 MS. HERBOLD: Oh. A-M-Y,
8 H-E-R-B-O-L-D.

9 MR. TONZOLA: Thank you.

10 MS. HERBOLD: Okay. I'm here on behalf
11 of American Dream. Some of you know I work for them.
12 There is an ordinance on here for a first reading
13 that I found out about today. Basically, I'm here
14 just to ask that we get an opportunity to meet with
15 the executive and his staff to kind of understand
16 what the fee schedule is. This won't impact American
17 Dream as much as it will directly impact most of our
18 tenants who are restaurants and stores. So we just
19 want to kind of understand the pricing structure
20 before it moves forward any further.

21 As you know, a lot of our fees were
22 developed in '19 before we even opened, right, and it
23 was about this unknown anticipation of what was going
24 to happen at American Dream. Now that I think we
25 have a five-year history, I think it would be a

1 really productive conversation to have with the
2 County.

3 And let me finalize it by saying the
4 County has been incredible. They've been one of the
5 best agencies we've worked with in New Jersey. We
6 get to work with a bunch of them. And the Health
7 Department has really been with us helping us get
8 open and keeping our property safe. So I definitely
9 want to say that as well, but that would be my one
10 comment for American Dream. Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

12 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: So for the
13 benefit of the public, I'll just make a couple of
14 comments now. The fee structure was reviewed by the
15 Health Department. It was recommended by the Health
16 Department. The ordinance was introduced in 2019.
17 The Health Department now has a much better idea of
18 what the services are that are required and the time
19 that they're spending on it.

20 They came to us and they asked that the
21 fee structure be increased to more accurately reflect
22 the actual costs that are incurred by the County.

23 At this point in time, we're advised,
24 and the County Executive has indicated this earlier,
25 we're advised that the costs that are being charged

1 are not adequate enough to cover the time and the
2 expense of the county officials that are inspecting
3 the various entities. So this is the first increase
4 since the ordinance went into effect in 2019. The
5 Commission Board did not consider any kind of
6 increases during COVID and sufficient time has passed
7 since COVID for the Health Department to evaluate it.

8 With all that being said, I'm happy to
9 provide you with a copy of this. You know, I'll take
10 your e-mail and I'm going to have to send it to you,
11 because I only have one copy.

12 MS. HERBOLD: Okay.

13 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: But I'm
14 happy to send it to you and I'm happy to discuss it
15 with you further.

16 This is the first reading. So there
17 will be a second reading on December 4th, and that
18 will be the opportunity for the final vote. So
19 you'll have some time to comment or to interact with
20 me during that time period. Okay?

21 MS. HERBOLD: Fantastic. Thank you.

22 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: So I have
23 her e-mail there, yes?

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Is her e-mail on it?

25 MR. TONZOLA: It's not on the --

1 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: Okay. All
2 right. Just before you leave, if you can provide it,
3 that would be great.

4 MS. HERBOLD: I'll just put it on one
5 of these papers.

6 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: Thank you
7 so much.

8 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

10 Pat DiRoma.

11 MR. DIROMA: Hi, Patrick DiRoma,
12 P-A-T-R-I-C-K D-I-R-O-M-A.

13 So I don't have any prepared comments
14 today. I was --

15 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Can you speak
16 into the mic, because we can't hear you.

17 MR. DIROMA: Sorry about that. Is that
18 better?

19 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Yes.

20 MR. DIROMA: So I don't have any
21 prepared comments today. I was mostly coming here
22 following up on an e-mail I sent to Mr. Duch looking
23 to get some clarification on the idea for a road diet
24 on Passaic Avenue in Wood-Ridge. Just the initial
25 response that I got so far as far as the County

1 Engineer is concerned just doesn't seem like it
2 passes the smell test, and so it's a little bit weird
3 that there's so much pushback when the town is
4 reaching out and in favor of such change to the
5 design.

6 Is there any clarification? I want a
7 chance to respond if there is.

8 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: So the
9 clarification is as follows: I sent your request
10 over to the administrator of Wood-Ridge. I was
11 advised by the administrator that Wood-Ridge did
12 conduct its own survey and study and that they shared
13 the results of that study with you and that the
14 results of that study were not acceptable to you.

15 Our County Engineer said a thorough
16 traffic study of the corridor would need to be
17 performed by the municipality and a study should
18 include future vehicle volumes and be unbiased.

19 So it is in the hands of the
20 municipality.

21 MR. DIROMA: The Wood-Ridge Town
22 Council, I asked them and they said they hadn't heard
23 back from the County.

24 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: I didn't
25 speak to the town council. I spoke to the Business

1 Administrator Christopher Eilert.

2 MR. DIROMA: And he's saying that he
3 reached out to me?

4 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: I told you
5 exactly what he said.

6 MR. DIROMA: I haven't had that
7 communication that you've described.

8 Okay. So is it my understanding that
9 they said -- so the town said they were not in favor
10 of it, is that my -- do I understand that correct?

11 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: What I had
12 said was that the town said that they did a study.
13 The study results were presented to you and they were
14 unacceptable to you. That's what I was told.

15 MR. DIROMA: Okay. I'm not aware of
16 any results that were presented to me. So I guess I
17 will --

18 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: I can only
19 repeat what I was told by the Administrator.

20 MR. DIROMA: Okay. Is there any
21 further clarification from the County Engineer on
22 this other than just the initial response?

23 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: I just said
24 that as well.

25 The county engineer said the following,

1 I'll say it again: "A thorough traffic study of the
2 corridor would need to be performed by the
3 municipality. The study should include future
4 vehicle volumes and be unbiased." Exactly what the
5 County Engineer said.

6 MR. DIROMA: I understand that. I had
7 sent a follow-up e-mail asking for clarification on
8 that response. That's what I was asking about. I
9 was asking if there was any further clarification on
10 that response, because I sent a reply to your e-mail
11 on that asking a variety of questions, because none
12 of what I put in my initial e-mail was ever addressed
13 in the County Engineer's response. So I was trying
14 to see if there was any additional thoughts.

15 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: I have
16 nothing else to add.

17 MR. DIROMA: Got it. Okay.

18 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: Thank you.

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Your last name, I'm
20 sorry?

21 MR. GSELL: Gsell.

22 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Gsell. Thank you.

23 MR. GSELL: It's Guy Gsell, G-U-Y
24 G-S-E-L-L.

25 Hi, I'm Guy Gsell from Field Station

1 Dinosaurus. I'm the founder and executive producer
2 there in Overpeck Park here in Leonia, New Jersey,
3 and I'm here to do two things. One is just give you
4 an update on Field Station Dinosaurus and some news
5 that we have and also to say thank you, thank you to
6 the Board Commissioners, thank you to the County
7 Executive and his team, thank you to the Parks
8 Department, and thank you to everyone here at Bergen
9 County who has been so important in the story and the
10 success of Field Station Dinosaurus since we moved
11 here, which is now nine years ago. We just finished
12 our ninth season in Overpeck Park.

13 We have a very easy job when it's time
14 to onboard our employees, because we just have to
15 tell them one thing. Every day at Field Station
16 Dinosaurus is the most important day in some kid's
17 life. It's a day that the kid has been waiting for.
18 It's a day that the kid will remember for years and
19 years afterwards.

20 My earliest memory is literally
21 animatronic dinosaurs at the New York World's Fair in
22 1964.

23 You know, to be in the memory business,
24 to have that honor, to have that responsibility to
25 know that what these kids are learning, the lessons

1 are going to become part of who they are and these
2 memories are going to be with them for a long, long
3 time. Bergen County has been so supportive and has
4 been so vital to what we're doing at Field Station
5 Dinosaurs.

6 Our mission at the Field Station is to
7 teach children and their families important lessons
8 about the world today using the story and science of
9 dinosaurs. So our mission is not to teach about
10 dinosaurs. It's to teach about science. It's to
11 teach about exploration. It's to teach about what
12 kids can learn here about the world today, and we
13 teach every kid that a scientist is not something
14 that they're going to become in the future, a
15 scientist is something they already are.

16 So it's been a great run. We had a
17 great time. Kids who came to Field Station Dinosaurs
18 are now young adults who work at Field Station
19 Dinosaurs. And although it's our ninth year in
20 Bergen County, it was our 13th year overall, which
21 means, of course, that soon they'll have the second
22 generation of dinosaur kids coming to Field Station
23 Dinosaurs.

24 In order to make sure that that
25 happens, as we get ready to approach our 10th season,

1 we have setup a Field Station Education Foundation,
2 and the owners of Field Station Dinosaurs will be
3 donating all of the assets, everything necessary to
4 run the theme park, which is really a bad name for
5 it, by the way, which I'm trying to convince the
6 workers' comp board.

7 [LAUGHTER]

8 MR. GSELL: But it means that this new
9 educational institution, the Field Station Education
10 Foundation, will take over the day-to-day operations
11 of Field Station Dinosaurs here at Overpeck Park and
12 that will help us to ensure that the lessons that
13 we're teaching, everything we're doing at the Field
14 Station can continue on for many, many years to come
15 in the most secure way possible.

16 The new independent board of directors
17 of the foundation has asked that I stay on for three
18 years as an interim executive director of the
19 not-for-profit to make sure that this transition is
20 very smoothly run and that the mission and the spirit
21 of the Field Station continues on even if I'm not
22 there.

23 So that's really all I came to tell
24 you. You know, I'm your tenant and happy to be
25 there, but more important the partnership that we

1 started back in 2019, the educational partnership
2 with Bergen County has been really one of the driving
3 forces. We have welcomed students from New York,
4 Pennsylvania, New Jersey, obviously, and Connecticut,
5 and we have welcomed guests from all 50 states of the
6 United States here to Bergen County to see the
7 dinosaurs.

8 So, again, thank you very much. I just
9 wanted to give you a quick update on what's happening
10 and just to keep you in the loop as we make this
11 important, but really positive transition to a
12 not-for-profit.

13 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you, Guy.

14 MR. GSELL: Thank you.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: It's a great
17 partnership. I had the opportunity to be there when
18 you opened the pavilion, and that same day they were
19 doing all the trips for all Bergen County and some
20 Passaic County schools. Just to see the kids'
21 excitement and to learn and to have the ability now
22 to teach underneath this pavilion is just incredible.
23 It's definitely a great addition to the park and
24 we're very excited to have you there.

25 MR. GSELL: It's received rave reviews

1 from every guest who has walked into the park.

2 They've had a great time there.

3 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Commissioner

4 Tanelli.

5 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: And just about a

6 month ago my grandson almost got eaten by a

7 Velociraptor.

8 [LAUGHTER]

9 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: The video is on

10 Facebook.

11 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you.

12 My wife is a school teacher, and they
13 love taking trips there. It's wonderful. Sorry to
14 see you go. I was listening to your speech. I
15 thought it was going to be gone forever. I'm glad to
16 see people are taking it over. Best of luck.

17 MR. GSELL: Yes, we're not going
18 anywhere. That's our plan, is to stay there and just
19 transition to this educational foundation and it will
20 give us a more sound financial -- there's a lot of
21 sponsorships and organizations who would write grants
22 to a not-for-profit.

23 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: That's great.

24 MR. GSELL: And like I said, my
25 investors, all the ownership has said that they're

1 willing to make this donation of all of the assets to
2 be not-for-profit.

3 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: I'm taking
4 Commissioner Tanelli back, because he didn't finish
5 it.

6 [LAUGHTER]

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you so much.

8 MR. GSELL: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Andrew Meehan.

10 MR. MEEHAN: Good evening.

11 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Good evening.

12 MR. MEEHAN: My name is Andrew Meehan
13 from Hackensack.

14 I wanted to say tonight I demand a
15 recount. I only lost by 205,000 votes to the top
16 guy, Commissioner Tanelli.

17 I just wanted to congratulate
18 Commissioner Tanelli and Commissioner Zur for, I
19 believe, it's your fifth time being elected. So
20 congratulations once again.

21 But the analysis of the totals says
22 that everyone is moving to the right.

23 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Good luck.

24 MR. MEEHAN: So hopefully that will
25 happen. I'm just letting you know what the stats are

1 saying. In the past, you won between 50,000 to
2 100,000 votes. This time it was a measly 17,000 by a
3 20-year-old and a 22-year-old.

4 Now, they didn't bring out the votes.
5 It was the president that brought out the votes.

6 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: I thought it
7 was you, Mr. Meehan.

8 [LAUGHTER]

9 MR. MEEHAN: No. It could have been my
10 charm, you know that.

11 But I just wanted to say
12 congratulations once again. And I wanted to ask a
13 question on behalf of my colleague who also ran, he
14 beat me, 306 votes, so great job on that, but I
15 wanted to find out more about the resource center.
16 He even told me tonight if I can actually get a hard
17 date, he will name it after me. So I thought that
18 that was a spectacular deal.

19 So what do you think, County Counsel
20 Duch, can you give me a win tonight that would be
21 incredible for the Bergen County residents?

22 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: I'd love to
23 give you a win, but the court is --

24 MR. MEEHAN: Is behind?

25 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: The court

1 is in control and the court will open when they are
2 ready.

3 MR. MEEHAN: One last note for the
4 representative from the American Dream Mall. I
5 absolutely kind of agree with her that if you made an
6 agreement in the past, that it should be honored, and
7 to as much as possible, recognizing that there were
8 costs that were unforeseeable. Because when you make
9 an agreement or a contract, you should honor that.
10 And I know for a fact Bergen County has a surplus of
11 at least \$34 million in the bank. So why not be a
12 little bit generous so we can grow the business?

13 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: So you're
14 advocating for more taxes, it sounds like?

15 MR. MEEHAN: More taxes? Isn't that
16 what a Democrat says? I don't know.

17 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Apparently not,
18 not by 17,000 people, but no.

19 [LAUGHTER]

20 MR. MEEHAN: You sound like more
21 Republicans.

22 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: I just wanted
23 to get you on the record that you're in favor of
24 higher taxes.

25 [LAUGHTER]

1 MR. MEEHAN: I'm in favor of growing
2 jobs, and I think the American Dream Mall is trying
3 to do that. So let's try to be generous to them.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you, Mr.
6 Meehan.

7 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: For the
8 record, it's not a mall, it's an entertainment
9 center.

10 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: It's a
11 destination.

12 MR. MEEHAN: I stand corrected once
13 again by Commissioner Zur.

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I move we close the
15 hearing to the public.

16 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

17 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

18 (All present Commissioners respond in
19 the affirmative.)

20 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Any opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 Review of Resolutions

23 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: We will now review
24 the resolutions to be voted on this evening.

25 CLERK POLLITT: You have Resolutions

1 #1248-24 through #1347-24.

2 Commissioner Zur had indicated that she
3 will abstain on Resolution #1253-24.

4 Resolutions of Unanimous Consent

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Do I have a motion
6 to accept the Resolutions as a Consent Agenda?

7 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

8 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Second.

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

10 (All present Commissioners respond in
11 the affirmative.)

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

13 (At this point in the proceeding roll
14 call is taken and the Consent Agenda is passed by a
15 unanimous vote, with Commissioner Silna Zur
16 abstaining on Resolution #1253-24.)

17 CLERK POLLITT: With seven yeases, the
18 Consent Agenda is approved.

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Are there any
20 Resolutions of Nonconsent, tabled or pulled?

21 CLERK POLLITT: There are none.

22 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

23 Ordinances

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: We will now go on to
25 our Ordinances for First Reading and Introduction.

1 Will the Clerk Read Ordinances 24-27
2 through 24-32 by title only.

3 CLERK POLLITT: 24-27 is an:

4 "ORDINANCE PROHIBITING NO TURN ON RED
5 MOVEMENTS FROM MADISON AVENUE EASTBOUND AND WESTBOUND
6 ONTO RIVER ROAD IN THE BOROUGH OF NEW MILFORD."

7 24-28 is an:

8 "ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BERGEN COUNTY
9 PLANNING BOARD'S SITE PLAN REVIEW FEE SCHEDULE."

10 24-29 is an:

11 "ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BERGEN COUNTY
12 PLANNING BOARD'S SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW FEE
13 SCHEDULE."

14 24-30 is an:

15 "ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A LICENSING
16 APPLICATION FEE STRUCTURE TO GOVERN THE OPERATION OF
17 VENDORS OPERATING FOOD AND BEVERAGE CONCESSIONS
18 DURING TEMPORARY AND SPECIAL EVENTS HOSTED ON
19 COUNTY-OWNED PROPERTY."

20 24-31 is an:

21 "ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FEE SCHEDULE OF
22 THE BERGEN COUNTY ORDINANCE 19-10 FOR THE AMERICAN
23 DREAM PROJECT LOCATED IN THE BOROUGH OF EAST
24 RUTHERFORD AND ADDING A MANDATORY FOOD SAFETY
25 TRAINING REQUIREMENT FOR ALL RETAIL FOOD

1 ESTABLISHMENTS."

2 24-32 is an:

3 "ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A FEE SCHEDULE
4 AND TO REGULATE USAGE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING
5 STATIONS TO ALLOW ROTATING USAGE TO ALLOW MULTIPLE
6 USERS TO CHARGE THEIR VEHICLES THROUGHOUT THE DAY."

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
8 to introduce Ordinances 24-27 through 24-32 as read
9 by the Clerk?

10 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

11 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

13 (All present Commissioners respond in
14 the affirmative.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

16 (At this point in the proceeding roll
17 call is taken and the Introduction and First Reading
18 of Ordinances 24-27 through 24-32 are passed by a
19 unanimous vote.)

20 CLERK POLLITT: With seven yeases,
21 Ordinances 24-27 through 24-32 are introduced and
22 pass First Reading.

23 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

24 Committee Reports from Commissioners

25 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: It is now time for

1 Committee reports.

2 I will start with Mr. Tanelli.

3 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Wow, I go first
4 today. Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I'm going back and
6 forth.

7 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Good evening,
8 everyone. I just wanted to quickly highlight a few
9 things from the last couple of weeks.

10 October 30th, I hosted here at the
11 county office our second annual Veterans of the Month
12 Appreciation Ceremony where we highlighted and
13 honored all of the veterans who have been part of the
14 Bergen County Veteran of the Month Program over the
15 past year.

16 I want to thank my colleagues, the
17 Division of Veterans Services, and the County
18 Executive for joining us in honoring our nation's
19 heros, but also thank the family and friends of those
20 who were honored.

21 When I started this program, I wanted
22 to ensure that our residents and the next generation
23 can have something to remember not only the stories
24 of these incredible individuals, but also that these
25 individuals are and have been a part of their

1 community. They're your neighbors, friends and
2 families, and we all should take the time every day
3 to remember those who have sacrificed and fought to
4 protect the rights we enjoy today.

5 With that, I wanted to highlight the
6 County's honoring the Veterans Day and reminding
7 people that the county is providing a round of free
8 golf for veterans at all six county golf courses
9 until Friday. That's a small gesture of appreciation
10 for their service and sacrifices.

11 While we hope this time on the green
12 brings some enjoyment. Let's remember this is just a
13 small part of what we owe our veterans. We must
14 continue our commitment to address the pressing
15 issues veterans face every day, from access to
16 quality healthcare to employment opportunities and
17 housing. Through the invaluable work of our Division
18 of Veterans Services, we can ensure that the
19 gratitude we show our veterans is matched by real
20 lasting support.

21 Finally, I want to quickly end by
22 thanking the voters of Bergen County who reelected
23 Tracy and I for our fifth term as your County
24 Commissioner. I'm honored to have your support as we
25 continue the work that's made Bergen County one of

1 the best places to live in the country. I promise to
2 continue our commitment to work every day to make
3 Bergen County a place that supports our veterans,
4 fights hunger, revitalizes our parks, strengthens our
5 neighborhoods and cares for all who call it home.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
8 Commissioner Tanelli.

9 Commissioner Marte.

10 COMMISSIONER MARTE: Thank you.

11 First of all, I just want to say that
12 this month, for the last 30 days, we have celebrated
13 many events that are very important to all of us in
14 many ways. I think the most important one of all, it
15 was just mentioned, Veterans Day, because we
16 celebrate veterans and the young men and women who
17 made the very difficult decision and brave decision
18 of leaving their home and their way of life to secure
19 and guarantee that our way of life continues. The
20 same thing for our security. And for that I want to
21 congratulate and say thank you to all the veterans.

22 Also, I would like to congratulate
23 Tracy Zur and Steve Tanelli for their victory in
24 their election. You work hard. You have worked very
25 hard and have the desire to continue serving the

1 public. It takes a lot for that, and for that I want
2 to thank you. You worked hard this year, and the
3 people responded by reelecting you again. So
4 congratulations.

5 CHAIRMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
6 Commissioner Marte.

7 Commissioner Sullivan.

8 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Thank you,
9 Chairwoman.

10 First, I do want to start by
11 congratulating my colleagues, Steve Tanelli and Tracy
12 Zur, by an overwhelming reelection last Tuesday. The
13 margin was a testament to the work that you both do
14 on behalf of our residents, and it's a privilege to
15 continue serving with you.

16 Also, want to congratulate you two on
17 both of your fifth terms, entering your fifth terms.
18 I had the privilege, when I first became a Freeholder
19 then, Commissioner now, to run with these two. They
20 are just two great public servants who really care,
21 and it was one of the best times of my life learning
22 from these two. I wish you nothing but more
23 continued success.

24 Mr. Farash, I'm surprised that you
25 didn't get up to speak tonight, as the top

1 vote-getter of your team. I totally expected you to
2 be the one to get up here and make a speech. Mr.
3 Meehan, I don't know.

4 MR. MEEHAN: That's okay.

5 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Tonight we
6 passed two shared services resolutions. One with the
7 Borough of Ridgefield consolidating their 9-1-1
8 dispatch services and another with the Borough of
9 Lodi as the county will now take over the borough's
10 snow and ice removal.

11 We will continually, continually,
12 continually find ways to save money for local and
13 county government by doing shared services. I know
14 some people were not a believer in the beginning and
15 they came around, but really, it makes sense, it
16 makes total sense. Why duplicate services when we
17 both can help each other? The people who win in that
18 scenario are the taxpayers that don't have to pay
19 twice. So great job by Bergen County once again.

20 Monday, November 11th, was Veterans
21 Day. Obviously a time to honor and remember the
22 brave men and women who have served our great
23 country. I was joined by Commissioner Marte and the
24 Mayor and Council in Bergenfield for their annual
25 ceremony this year held at Cooper's Pond due to the

1 ongoing construction at the Borough Hall. I want to
2 thank the Bergenfield Veterans Advisory Committee for
3 hosting the event and thank the local VFW and DAV for
4 all the support that they provided to the Veterans in
5 our community. Also, the town DPW employees, first
6 responders, everyone was there, and I want to extend
7 my heartfelt thanks to them.

8 My father was a veteran, a Navy
9 midshipman. He was in the Korean War. So I have a
10 soft spot in my heart. My two brothers were both
11 Navy men, even though my one brother who is for Army,
12 I don't get it, but proud of the service that my
13 family has given to this country. The staff that
14 came out on Veterans Day is amazing that less than
15 one percent of this country has ever served in the
16 military. It's just kudos to the people that have
17 chosen to serve.

18 And last Sunday, I attended with all my
19 colleagues the Bergen County St. Patrick's Day Grand
20 Marshall's Installation Breakfast hosted by The
21 Council of Irish Associations of Greater Bergen
22 County. Congratulations to all the aides, the grand
23 marshall that were honored. And a special shout-out
24 to the 2025 Grand Marshal, our very own surrogate,
25 Michael Dressler. Another organization that

1 obviously is near and dear to my heart and my
2 heritage and we look forward to the parade in March.

3 Once again, congratulations to my
4 colleagues and thank you, Chairwoman.

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
6 Commissioner Sullivan.

7 Commissioner Amoroso.

8 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes,
9 Chairwoman.

10 First of all, I have to say that,
11 Commissioner Sullivan, when you were praising Mr.
12 Farash, I think he blushed.

13 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: He did.

14 MR. FARASH: At least I still have some
15 blood pumping.

16 [LAUGHTER]

17 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Again, as
18 everyone is saying, congratulations to our
19 Commissioner colleagues, Steve Tanelli and Tracy Zur.
20 It was a long campaign, it was a tough election
21 night, but you guys won, as did our Sheriff Anthony
22 Cureton.

23 I attended a couple of veterans events.
24 Today I went to the launch of the YWCA Project
25 Sisterhood based at the YWCA. The Sisterhood will

1 support the social, physical, and mental wellness
2 needs of women coming back from the military. They
3 will do things like case management support,
4 entrepreneurship training, just exposing our
5 returning women veterans to job opportunities and
6 housing opportunities. There's a lot of work to be
7 done and it will be now based at the wonderful YWCA.

8 I went to Veterans Day in Mahwah. We
9 all fanned out to various towns. We heard from our
10 local veteran leaders Frank Calandrillo, Rich Silvia
11 and Mahwah is finally, I'm glad to hear it,
12 installing the veterans banners that you see in a lot
13 of towns. So we'll be able to celebrate our
14 veterans.

15 I also went to a number of NAACP events
16 in my role as liaison to the County African American
17 Committee. First of all, I went to the Freedom Fund
18 Luncheon. Among the many who were honored is my
19 intern, Kasai Sanchez, who is still in her teens.
20 She was awarded the Youth Freedom Fighter Award.
21 Congratulations of what our honorees do for our
22 community.

23 We also attended, it was really quite
24 touching, the NAACP prayer walk. We went from Two
25 Bergen County Plaza over to the courthouse and

1 stopped every so often along the way to say a prayer
2 and to be mindful of the decision-making that was
3 going to take place just in a couple of days on
4 Election Day.

5 Weeks earlier, a number of us attended
6 the Stationhouse Adjustment Conference, which
7 promotes alternative methods for police to handle
8 first time juvenile offenders who have minor
9 offenses. We heard about a number of Bergen County
10 programs that can help these kids as they are going
11 through the contract process that will avoid them
12 having a criminal record.

13 And Bergen250, we've started. We are
14 in advance of the 250th celebration of the American
15 Revolution. We have been holding seminars on various
16 things. In October we told the real story, The
17 Capture of Major John Andre and Discovery of Benedict
18 Arnold's Treason, and tonight, unfortunately, we're
19 not able to be there, it sounds fascinating,
20 Underwater Archeology of the Revolution: Current and
21 Future Research Efforts on Lake Champlain.

22 Finally, I want to remember a northern
23 Bergen County icon, Lou "The Shoe" Rizzo, who passed
24 on Sunday, November 3rd at the age of 96. Lou was a
25 boxer, a firefighter in Wyckoff for about a century,

1 and a shoemaker, hence Lou "the Shoe".

2 He was less than 5 feet tall, but yet a
3 booming Jersey accented voice. He always praised
4 Mahwah's non-partisan government saying we don't want
5 to be held enthralled to county bosses down in
6 Hackensack. And everybody loved him and he lasted,
7 he was at the wonderful Villa Marie Clare hospice up
8 in northern Bergen County for three months, and of
9 course they all adored him there. I think he asked
10 all of the caretakers to marry him.

11 [LAUGHTER]

12 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: But RIP, Lou
13 "The Shoe."

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
15 Commissioner Amoroso.

16 Commissioner Zur.

17 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Thank you,
18 Chairwoman.

19 I want to give a special thank you
20 first and foremost to the voters of Bergen County for
21 giving Steve and I an opportunity to continue to
22 serve on this board. It has been such a privilege
23 for the last 12 years to get to work with you all and
24 work with the administration to move things forward
25 to deliver effective and efficient and compassionate

1 government and to try and meet the needs of our
2 residents at every step along their lives. And, you
3 know, I think in the last two weeks as I was both at
4 the senior centers in Bergenfield and in East
5 Rutherford celebrating Halloween and so many other
6 things and North Arlington as well we were, right,
7 Steve?

8 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Whether it was
10 being with the Salute to Champions where we were
11 celebrating those who empower businesses and
12 individuals who are embracing those with unique
13 abilities and finding work opportunities for them to
14 make sure that they live their most fulfilled and
15 meaningful lives.

16 Thank you to Demarest Farms, as they
17 donated four pallets full of apples to the Center for
18 Food Action to be distributed for Thanksgiving.

19 Or with Oradell's announcement, the
20 announcement of their Street Smart campaign as part
21 of the National Pedestrian Safety Month, where
22 they're launching a study in cooperation with NJTPA,
23 EZ Ride or the County of Bergen, where they're going
24 to be including traffic studies to access the
25 necessary improvements and focus on education to

1 encourage safer, more attentive driving, biking and
2 walking throughout the borough.

3 Or whether it was with our County
4 employees at the Trunk or Treat, watching them
5 celebrate with their kids in creativeness.

6 There is so much we do.

7 Oh, didn't forget about open space
8 presentations both in Ridgefield, Park Ridge, and
9 Garfield. Pushing out money to our communities to
10 strengthen recreation and the way that we engage in
11 health and meaningful engagement with our community.

12 All of that is the reason why I'm so
13 grateful to serve on this board, because we really
14 make a difference in the lives of our neighbors. We
15 do things to deliver further means every single day,
16 and I am grateful that I get to continue to roll up
17 my sleeves for the next three years.

18 So thank you all for not just your kind
19 words, but your emotional support. I want to give a
20 special thanks to Christina, my aide, who tolerated
21 me throughout this entire last several months.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: And Steve is
24 grateful for Mark as well, too.

25 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Tracy is

1 grateful for Mark.

2 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Yeah, we're
3 all grateful for Mark, but it was all of the aides
4 also who pitched in on so many different things
5 throughout this time as we were crisscrossing this
6 county and listening, so that we could be really in
7 touch with what is going on in the hearts and the
8 minds of our voters and our residents. This was
9 really a team effort, and I just want to say thank
10 you.

11 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Christina
12 deserves a medal.

13 [LAUGHTER]

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
15 Commissioner Zur.

16 Commissioner Voss.

17 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Thank you, Madam
18 Chairwoman.

19 As a history teacher, you cannot
20 understand how I was out of my mind over this
21 election. Because I have been so, so worried for
22 many, many years. I've been in politics for over 33
23 years, and I worry that people become apathetic and
24 that they're not engaged in stuff. And I don't care
25 which side you were on, you were engaged this year

1 and that made me extremely happy.

2 The thing that is very, very important,
3 as all of colleagues have mentioned, is that we
4 celebrated Veterans Day. My family has been in the
5 American military since the Civil War, so I have a
6 long history of loving, loving our vets.

7 My VFW club is in Fort Lee, and I think
8 I have spoken to them every year for the last 35
9 years and they just expect me to -- I'd come out in a
10 wheelchair if I had to, you know, because that's how
11 important they are to me. The first thing I say to
12 them is thank you, thank you, thank you from the
13 bottom of my heart.

14 I don't know if a lot of people
15 remember, but this was called "Armistice Day" up
16 until 1954. Armistice Day was to celebrate the end
17 of World War I, which was supposed to be the war to
18 end all wars. However, we had so many other wars,
19 Korea, Vietnam, that President Eisenhower said this
20 has to be called Veterans Day.

21 One of the most disconcerting things
22 is, and I think someone mentioned it, less than one
23 percent of the American population is in the
24 military. And, interestingly enough, today more and
25 more women are joining the military in the various

1 branches of service. Only 1.3 million people are in
2 our military today, and I worry because of Russia, I
3 worry because of North Korea, I worry because of
4 China, that it's better to be -- what did Teddy
5 Roosevelt say -- "walk softly, but carry a big
6 stick," and so that's kind of my philosophy as well.

7 It seems like many people are veterans,
8 but less than 6 percent of our population today are
9 veterans. We have a very active VFW and a couple of
10 our members are over 100 years old and served in
11 World War I. I'm very supportive of them, and I'll
12 tell you, some of the 100-year-old people look better
13 than some of the 60-year-old people, so there must be
14 something to be said for that.

15 I just think that it is so important
16 that everybody care about their country whatever side
17 you're on, care about your country, love your
18 country. It is the most wonderful country in the
19 world.

20 And one of the things I also -- because
21 I can talk forever because I'm a history teacher, but
22 I will finish by saying that very few members in our
23 government are veterans. In our House of
24 Representatives and in the Senate, only a small
25 percentage have ever served. So maybe we should

1 think about electing more veterans so that they are
2 more aware of some of the needs that we face today.
3 So I send to the veterans, God bless you, keep you
4 safe and thank you, thank you, thank you for all you
5 have done for us. God bless.

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
7 Commissioner Voss.

8 I'm last. Well, first I want to,
9 again, congratulate Commissioner Zur and Commissioner
10 Tanelli.

11 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Oh, yes, I'm sorry.

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I can't imagine
13 being on this board without both of you. As
14 Commissioner Sullivan said, you were my mentors when
15 I came on, and I'm so thankful. I think there's
16 still so much work to get done, and I'm just excited
17 that we're back together and we're going to continue
18 working for the residents of Bergen County. So thank
19 you and congratulations and thank you to the voters
20 of Bergen County.

21 As we all spoke about Veterans Day, we
22 all went to several towns throughout the county, but
23 there were two unveilings of monuments that we had.
24 We had one in Elmwood Park two weeks ago, and it was
25 the Vietnam War Veteran, which I thought was an

1 amazing structure that was set up, because as you all
2 know, unfortunately the Vietnam War was a very
3 challenging time, not many people agreed with it and
4 I felt bad for a lot of the veterans that came back
5 from that war and then they were basically, I mean,
6 insulted in so many ways. They never got to be
7 appreciated for what they did for our country. So
8 Elmwood Park had this beautiful structure that was
9 set up for the Vietnam veterans where there was
10 approximately 60,000 that perished during that war.
11 So I am very thankful for that.

12 And Maywood also unveiled a plaque for
13 the Gulf War. So that was also very nice that
14 Commissioner Zur and I attended.

15 I also had the opportunity, I'm very
16 excited that New Bridge Medical Center continues to
17 just have so many amazing technology and services to
18 all our residents in Bergen County. We had the
19 opportunity to visit them, because they got the
20 Da Vinci 5, which they call it the "DV Robotic
21 Machine" and we are one of three in the state that
22 have one. So we're very excited to have this. We
23 just had the opening last week. We even had the
24 surgeons do a test trial on how this -- not with
25 people obviously, but showing us how it works, and it

1 was so impressive. The way that the surgeries are
2 run, they're a lot more smoothly, less time to stay
3 in the hospital, because it's so perfectly done
4 without really doing any invasive surgeries. So I'm
5 excited to see how it's going to affect most of our
6 communities throughout Bergen County and to our
7 residents.

8 We also came together for the month of
9 October and had a rally for breast cancer over here
10 at the courthouse. I wanted to thank the Bergen
11 County Women Lawyers, Englewood Hospital, and all the
12 sponsors and partnerships that came together and
13 basically were here to bring awareness and to promote
14 early detection in supporting those all that have
15 been affected. We heard stories from so many
16 different woman and men, because men do get breast
17 cancer as well, and just it's so important for the
18 early detection. So I'm very thankful for them
19 having this amazing rally.

20 In regards to the check, yes, we went
21 to the last check for the open space at Park Ridge
22 where we gave them a \$64,000 check for some of their
23 lighting on their fields. And tonight as we're very
24 excited that one of our resolutions was to approve
25 the open space that will be the money that will be

1 now distributed to the municipalities for next year
2 for 2025. So we're very excited that all our
3 municipalities can take advantage of this fund and be
4 able to work on their fields, especially a lot of the
5 elementary and the high school fields and all the
6 fields for the children to enjoy throughout the
7 county.

8 So thank you again, and I think that's
9 the end of the meeting.

10 There being nothing further --

11 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Just one thing
12 real quick on open space.

13 So we did pass the resolution tonight.
14 I want to thank all the members of the open space. I
15 sit on that board as a voting member, and this is the
16 third year that we've gotten the grants done on time
17 so that the municipalities get their money. There
18 was at one point we were almost a year and a half
19 behind awarding these grants out. So because of the
20 hard work in that department, I just want to thank
21 them all for their work and thank all the members.
22 We do site visits for land acquisitions. There's a
23 lot of work that goes into this, and it's exciting
24 that now for the third year in a row we get an
25 opportunity to vote on awarding before the year

1 starts.

2 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I also want to
3 announce that Winter Wonderland will be opening the
4 day after Thanksgiving, which is the 29th, is it?

5 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Yes.

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: It's November 29th,
7 and we're so excited. It will be open until mid
8 January?

9 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: February.

10 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Well, for skating.

11 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: For skating.

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Winter Wonderland
13 will close in mid February. Thank you.

14 Let it Glow has opened already and will
15 be open until January 12th from 4 to 8 p.m. Thursday
16 through Sunday and Friday and Saturday, 4 to 9 p.m.
17 and it will be closed on Christmas. It's bigger.
18 It's better. We're even going to have multiple
19 crafts. We invited a lot of the residents of Bergen
20 County to come and sell their crafts and have
21 different holiday treats for us. There's also going
22 to be some food vendors. It's exciting, brings the
23 family together, and so much to do. So we welcome
24 everybody to join us for Winter Wonderland. You
25 don't have to drive to New York City, and you'll have

1 a great time.

2 Oh, and before I forget, I wanted to
3 thank my aide Nicole and also wish her a Happy
4 Birthday and I wanted to say thank you. We had our
5 Hispanic Heritage Month two and a half weeks ago, and
6 I just want to say thank you, because it was the
7 first one, there was a lot on her, but it was great.
8 We had it at Bergen Community College, and it was
9 just such a great opportunity to really share all our
10 culture and everyone that came together and all the
11 honorees. We really had a lot of veteran honorees.
12 It was really nice this year. So thank you, Nicole,
13 for that.

14 Adjournment

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: There being nothing
16 further to come before this meeting, I move to
17 adjourn.

18 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: I second.

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

20 (All present Commissioners respond in
21 the affirmative.)

22 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Any opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: We are adjourned at
25 7:52 p.m.

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(Whereupon, the Public Meeting is
adjourned at 7:52 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, CANDICE CARUCCI, a Professional Court Reporter, and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, hereby certify that the foregoing is a verbatim record of the testimony provided under oath before any court, referee, board, commission or other body created by statute of the State of New Jersey.

I am not related to the parties involved in this action; I have no financial interest, nor am I related to an agent of or employed by anyone with a financial interest in the outcome of this action. This transcript complies with Regulation 13:43-5.9 of the New Jersey Administrative Code.

My Commission Expires:
8/26/2025

Candice Carucci

A Notary Public of the
State of New Jersey
License No. 2399765