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COUNTY OF BERGEN
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2024
COMMENCING AT 7:14 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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

- RAFAEL MARTE

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

EDWARD J. FLORIO, ESQUIRE
COUNSEL TO THE BOARD

STEVEN SPOTO
CLERK TO THE BOARD
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & POLICY

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HEARING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

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1 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The meeting is
2 called to order at 7:14 p.m.

3 Before we begin our meeting, I ask that
4 everyone please take a moment to silence their
5 phones.

6 Will the Clerk please read the Sen.
7 Byron Baer Open Public Meetings Act.

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

20 Roll Call

21 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk
22 please call the roll.

23 (At this point in the proceeding roll
24 call is taken with Commissioners Sullivan, Tanelli,
25 Voss, Silna Zur, Vice Chairwoman Amoroso, and

1 Chairwoman Ortiz present, with Commissioner Marte
2 absent.)

3 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Evidence of a quorum
4 is present.

5 Pledge of Allegiance

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Please join me in
7 the Pledge of Allegiance, and please remain standing
8 for a Moment of Silence.

9 Commissioner Amoroso, would you like to
10 lead us.

11 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.
12 Please join me in honoring America.

13 (At this point in the proceeding all
14 rise for a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance,
15 led by Vice Chairwoman Amoroso.)

16 Moment of Silence

17 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Please remain
18 standing for a Moment of Silence while we honor the
19 life and legacy of Dolores Ann Phillips, a devoted
20 servant to her community, a loving mother,
21 grandmother, and friend.

22 Dolores' life was defined by her
23 passion for helping others and her unwavering
24 dedication to service. Her impact was felt across
25 her work in health care, law enforcement, social

1 services, and as a fearless union leader.

2 Dolores touched countless lives with
3 her compassion, strength, and commitment to making
4 the world a better place. As we reflect on her
5 extraordinary journey, let us remember the joy she
6 brought to her family and friends, her unwavering
7 faith and her love for her community. May her memory
8 be a blessing and inspiration to us all.

9 (Whereupon, a Moment of Silence is
10 observed.)

11 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

12 Minutes

13 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk
14 please read the minutes to be accepted.

15 CLERK SPOTO: The minutes to be
16 accepted are as follows:

17 October 1st, 2024 - Work and Public
18 Sessions; all present.

19 October 15, 2024 - Work and Public
20 Sessions; Commissioners Voss and Tanelli absent.

21 October 30, 2024 - Work Session;
22 Commissioner Sullivan absent.

23 November 13, 2024 - Work and Public
24 Sessions; all present.

25 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion

1 to accept the minutes?

2 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Motion.

3 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

4 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

5 (All present Commissioners respond in
6 the affirmative.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

8 (No response.)

9 Hearing of the General Public

10 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I now move we open
11 the Commissioners meeting to the general public.

12 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Second.

13 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

16 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: We will now have the
19 hearing of the general public, with a three-minute
20 time limit in effect, in accordance with the Bergen
21 County Commissioner bylaws.

22 For those members of the public who
23 would like to participate during the public comment,
24 please fill out a sheet to be recognized.

25 Would the counselor please explain the

1 process by which the public will be recognized.

2 MR. FLORIO: Thank you, Chairwoman.

3 If you're recognized to speak by the
4 Chair, please come to the podium, state your name,
5 spell your last name, and I'll let you know when your
6 three minutes has expired.

7 Isidor Farash.

8 MR. FARASH: Isidor Farash, Emerson.

9 Thank you, Chairwoman Ortiz.

10 So I handed out a few pages of
11 material. I don't expect that anyone's been fully
12 through it yet. I just wanted to briefly touch on
13 what I'm proposing. I mentioned it a couple of
14 meetings ago. It's an outline to reinvigorate the
15 light rail project that's been in a holding pattern
16 for decades now.

17 The only thing I really wanted to say
18 about this, to clarify it in advance, is that it may
19 sound like it's got a lot of theoretical physics
20 involved, but it doesn't. Everything I've mentioned
21 is easily accomplished with the commercial technology
22 that exists today. And what I have strived to do is
23 to keep the cost, both construction and operation, as
24 low as possible to make the project palatable and to
25 fit within the existing budget and structure that was

1 developed 20 years ago.

2 I would say, this comment is out of
3 school, but just what my intuition is, that whatever
4 budget they allocated back then could probably cover
5 all of this that I've recommended in the paperwork I
6 submitted.

7 So that's it. I'll be back for the
8 next meeting, maybe someone will have questions.

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you, Mr.
10 Farash.

11 MR. FARASH: Thank you.

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: I move we close the
13 hearing to the public.

14 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

16 (All present Commissioners respond in
17 the affirmative.)

18 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 Review of Resolutions

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

23 CLERK SPOTO: Resolutions #1348-24
24 through #1540-24.

25 Commissioner Zur has indicated that she

1 will abstain on Resolution #1413-24.

2 Thank you.

3 Resolutions of Unanimous Consent

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

6 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

7 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Second.

8 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

11 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

12 (At this point in the proceeding roll
13 call is taken and the Consent Agenda is passed by a
14 vote of six in favor, with Commissioner Silna Zur
15 abstaining on Resolution #1413-24, and Commissioner
16 Marte absent.)

17 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeases and one
18 absent, the Consent Agenda is approved.

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

21 CLERK SPOTO: There are none.

22 Ordinances

23 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Before we go on to
24 our Second Reading and public hearings, will the
25 Clerk please state for the record the Proof of

1 Publication stipulation.

2 CLERK SPOTO: The Proof of Publication
3 of Ordinance Notice of Public Hearing for Ordinances
4 24-27 through 24-32 were published in accordance with
5 the law and are on file in the Clerk's Office.

6 A copy of the Notice of Hearing and
7 Ordinances 24-27 through 24-32 were duly posted,
8 pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:A2-17.

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk read
10 Ordinance 24-27 by title only.

11 CLERK SPOTO: 24-27 is an:

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

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

16 May I have a motion to open the hearing
17 on Ordinance 24-27 to the public?

18 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

19 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

20 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

23 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

24 (No response.)

25 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The public hearing

1 is open, with a five-minute time limit in effect, to
2 speak about Ordinance 24-27 only at this time.

3 The board attorney will keep the time.

4 MR. FLORIO: There are no speakers,
5 Chairwoman.

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
7 to close the public hearing on Ordinance 24-27?

8 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

9 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

10 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

13 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Is there any board
16 discussion on Ordinance 24-27?

17 (No response.)

18 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
19 to adopt Ordinance 24-27 as read by the Clerk?

20 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

21 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

22 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

23 (All present Commissioners respond in
24 the affirmative.)

25 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

1 (At this point in the proceeding roll
2 call is taken and the Second Reading and Adoption of
3 Ordinance 24-27 is passed by a vote of six in favor,
4 with Commissioner Marte absent.)

5 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeases, Ordinance
6 24-27 is adopted and passes Second Reading.

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk read
8 Ordinance 24-28 by title only.

9 CLERK SPOTO: 24-28 is an:

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

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

13 May I have a motion to open the hearing
14 to 24-28 to the public?

15 COMMISSIONER VOSS: So moved.

16 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Second.

17 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

20 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The public hearing
23 is open, with a five-minute time limit, to speak
24 about Ordinance 24-28 only at this time.

25 The Board Attorney will keep the time.

1 MR. FLORIO: There are no speakers,
2 Chairwoman.

3 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
4 to close the public hearing on Ordinance 24-28?

5 COMMISSIONER VOSS: So moved.

6 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

10 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Is there any board
13 discussion on Ordinance 24-28?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
16 to adopt Ordinance 24-28?

17 COMMISSIONER VOSS: So moved.

18 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Second.

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Any opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

22 (At this point in the proceeding roll
23 call is taken and the Second Reading and Adoption of
24 Ordinance 24-28 is passed by a vote of six in favor,
25 with Commissioner Marte absent.)

1 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeases, Ordinance
2 24-28 is adopted and passes Second Reading.

3 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk read
4 Ordinance 24-29 by title only?

5 CLERK SPOTO: 24-29 is an:

6 "ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BERGEN COUNTY
7 PLANNING BOARD'S SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW FEE
8 SCHEDULE."

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

10 May I have a motion to open the hearing
11 on Ordinance 24-29 to the public?

12 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: So moved.

13 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Second.

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

15 (All present Commissioners respond in
16 the affirmative.)

17 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The public hearing
20 is open, with a five-minute time limit in effect, to
21 speak about Ordinance 24-29 only at this time.

22 The Board Attorney will keep the time.

23 MR. FLORIO: There are no speakers,
24 Chairwoman.

25 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion

1 to close the public hearing on Ordinance 24-29?

2 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: So moved.

3 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

4 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

5 (All present Commissioners respond in
6 the affirmative.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Any opposed?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Is there any board
10 discussion on Ordinance 24-29?

11 (No response.)

12 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
13 to adopt Ordinance 24-29?

14 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: So moved.

15 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Second.

16 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

20 (At this point in the proceeding roll
21 call is taken and the Second Reading and Adoption of
22 Ordinance 24-29 is passed by a vote of six in favor,
23 with Commissioner Marte absent.)

24 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeases, Ordinance
25 24-29 is adopted and passes Second Reading.

1 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Will the Clerk read
2 Ordinance 24-30 by title only.

3 CLERK SPOTO: 24-30 is an:

4 "ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A LICENSING
5 APPLICATION FEE STRUCTURE TO GOVERN THE OPERATION OF
6 VENDORS OPERATING FOOD AND BEVERAGE CONCESSIONS
7 DURING TEMPORARY/SPECIAL EVENTS HOSTED ON
8 COUNTY-OWNED PROPERTY."

9 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

10 May I have a motion to open the hearing
11 on Ordinance 24-30 to the public?

12 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: So moved.

13 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

15 (All present Commissioners respond in
16 the affirmative.)

17 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The public hearing
20 is open, with a five minute time limit in effect, to
21 speak about Ordinance 24-30 only at this time.

22 MR. FLORIO: There are no speakers,
23 Chairwoman.

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
25 to close the public hearing on Ordinance 24-30?

1 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: So moved.

2 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

3 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

4 (All present Commissioners respond in
5 the affirmative.)

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Is there any board
9 discussion on Ordinance 24-30?

10 (No response.)

11 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
12 to adopt Ordinance 24-30 as was read by the Clerk?

13 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: So moved.

14 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

16 (All present Commissioners respond in
17 the affirmative.)

18 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

19 (At this point in the proceeding roll
20 call is taken and the Second Reading and Adoption of
21 Ordinance 24-30 is passed by a vote of six in favor,
22 with Commissioner Marte absent.)

23 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeses, Ordinance
24 24-30 are is adopted and passes Second Reading.

25 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion

1 to table Ordinance 24-31?

2 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: So moved.

3 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

4 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

5 (All present Commissioners respond in
6 the affirmative.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

8 (At this point in the proceeding roll
9 call is taken and the motion to table Ordinance 24-31
10 is passed by a vote of six in favor, with
11 Commissioner Marte absent.)

12 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeases, Ordinance
13 24-31 is tabled.

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Duch, would you
15 like to make a comment?

16 COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR DUCH: Thank you
17 very much for tabling that ordinance. The Deputy
18 Administrator and myself will have a meeting early
19 this coming week and I will advise you of the results
20 of that meeting.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you, Mr. Duch.
23 Will the Clerk read Ordinance 24-32 by
24 title only.

25 CLERK SPOTO: 24-32 is an:

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

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

6 May I have a motion to open the hearing
7 on Ordinance 24-32?

8 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: So moved.

9 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Second.

10 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

13 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: The public hearing
16 is open, with a five time limit in effect, to speak
17 about Ordinance 24-32 only at this time.

18 MR. FLORIO: There are no speakers,
19 Chairwoman.

20 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
21 to close the public hearing on Ordinance 24-32?

22 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: So moved.

23 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Second.

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

25 (All present Commissioners respond in

1 the affirmative.)

2 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Opposed?

3 (No response.)

4 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Is there any board
5 discussion?

6 (No response.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: May I have a motion
8 to adopt Ordinance 24-32 as was read by the Clerk?

9 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: So moved.

10 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: Second.

11 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: All in favor?

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

14 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Roll call, please.

15 (At this point in the proceeding roll
16 call is taken and the Second Reading and Adoption of
17 Ordinance 24-32 is passed by a vote of six in favor,
18 with Commissioner Marte absent.)

19 CLERK SPOTO: With six yeases, Ordinance
20 24-32 is adopted and passes Second Reading.

21 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

22 Committee Reports from Commissioners

23 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: It is now time for
24 Commissioner committee reports.

25 We will start with Commissioner Zur.

1 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Thank you so
2 much, Chairwoman.

3 First I want to thank all of my
4 colleagues who came to the Jewish Family Services
5 event. It was really very meaningful to be
6 recognized for the work that we've been doing on food
7 security and that was really something we did
8 collaboratively, so it meant so much to me to have
9 you all there.

10 In this windup before Thanksgiving, we
11 were all about food distribution. We had a food
12 distribution at Overpeck Park, where we pushed out
13 90,000 pounds, 4,500 boxes of produce, to over 40
14 different agencies throughout Bergen County that then
15 went on to distribute them to thousands of family
16 throughout Bergen County. It is one time during the
17 year where the media attention actually is on food
18 security, but so many of our pantry directors are
19 doing heroic work every single day to meet the
20 ever-increasing need. We have seen, as you heard me
21 talk about over and over and over again, a 26 percent
22 increase in food insecurity in utilization of our
23 food pantries just in this past year, that's on top
24 of the expediential increases we saw during the
25 pandemic.

1 So to all those I worked with on the
2 line in Overpeck or on the line in Fairview or at the
3 NAACP turkey distribution which fed over 250
4 families, or at the Sheriff's turkey distribution,
5 where they pushed out 1,300 turkeys for the Center
6 for Food Action, which was a third of the need of CFA
7 for the holiday, I want to say thank you. Because
8 the work that we did to meet the needs of the holiday
9 was tremendous, the attention that it draws to the
10 need of hunger in our community was even more
11 important, and may that attention be something that
12 lingers well beyond the holiday season as well.

13 Tonight we put forward Resolution
14 #1406-24, where we are partnering with Table to Table
15 to do some really spectacular work to make sure that
16 they can continue to do the food rescue operations
17 that they're doing throughout the county.

18 We purchased five electric vehicles for
19 our maintenance and service repairs.

20 So I'm very excited for what we're
21 doing to try to curb our carbon footprint here in
22 Bergen County, and I'm eager to continue to work with
23 the administration to that end.

24 To all of you, one of the things is we
25 spend all this time during Thanksgiving is thinking

1 about what we're thankful for. I'm tremendously
2 thankful that I get to work with all of you and that
3 Steve and I get another three years to do it. I just
4 wanted to say thank you, because this is the season
5 of gratitude and something I've certainly been
6 feeling at this time.

7 That is the end of my report.

8 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
9 Commissioner Zur.

10 Commissioner Voss.

11 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Thank you, Madam
12 Chairwoman.

13 On November 26th, we celebrated
14 Albanian Independence Day. Now, I didn't know much
15 about Albania until last year when I was doing some
16 research, and I'm very, very impressed with this
17 country and I wish they would be an example to
18 everybody in the world, because in Albania, half the
19 population are Muslims and half the population are
20 Christians and they get along great together. So I'm
21 so proud of them that I wanted to call attention that
22 we don't have to have all this hatred in the world,
23 it can be worked out. And Albania is definitely an
24 example of this.

25 Several years ago, HIV was a horrible,

1 horrible epidemic that was infecting so many people
2 and we still celebrate because today we have a lot of
3 medical research that has really helped a great deal,
4 but I remember one of my favorite singers was a man
5 named Freddie Mercury and every year I always think
6 about looking at --

7 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: You're
8 killing me!

9 COMMISSIONER VOSS: I just talk off the
10 top of my head. I don't have anything written.

11 But Freddie Mercury was a wonderful
12 singer and Bohemian Rhapsody is a movie that I
13 watched many times, and it really is very
14 enlightening and a wonderful story about how we are
15 overcoming so many bad things.

16 As a history teacher, I have to make
17 sure that everybody is aware that December 7th is
18 Pearl Harbor Day. Now, it worries me very much
19 because many of the children today don't know very
20 much about all of the things the United States has
21 endured.

22 In my VFW, we still have several guys
23 who are over 100 years old who fought in World War
24 II, and I pay homage to them every chance I get
25 because people have to remember what some people have

1 endured to give us the Land of the Free.

2 I'm very involved with an organization
3 called Project Literacy and this is a wonderful
4 organization. It is for adults. Bergen County has a
5 very large Project Literacy, and one of the things we
6 do is teach people who don't speak English how to
7 read English. And we have many, many different
8 groups that come. One of the things that's wonderful
9 about this is all of the teachers are volunteers and
10 we don't charge anything for the services, but to
11 learn how to read and speak English correctly gives
12 you an entrance into the wonderful world of the
13 United States. One of the things we do is, it's not
14 in the classroom, you will never be embarrassed, you
15 will never be ashamed, it will be one on one. We
16 have, as I said, people from all over the world who
17 are doing great as a result of Project Literacy.

18 And just one more thing, because I live
19 in Fort Lee. The George Washington Bridge is very
20 much undergoing renovation. It opened in 1931.
21 There has been no real renovation on that bridge for
22 almost 100 years. This is unbelievable, the
23 workmanship and the things that I learn about. This
24 bridge was part of my life from the time I was born.
25 So it is wonderful that it's being refurbished. It's

1 going to be great in the future.

2 Please learn your history. It's so
3 important to be grateful not only on Thanksgiving but
4 all year long.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

7 Commissioner Sullivan.

8 COMMISSIONER SULLIVAN: I hate talking
9 after Joan Voss. She's so awesome. You're the best,
10 Joan.

11 Tonight we passed two resolutions that
12 I am particularly proud of. First was Resolution
13 #1401-24, which was for the Division of Mental Health
14 and Addiction Services. This will allow them to
15 further their alcohol education and rehabilitation
16 programs as well as withdrawal management.

17 I'm sure everyone knows all the work
18 we've done here on this board for addiction and
19 recovery, and obviously this is something near and
20 dear to my heart. So it is my honor to support that
21 resolution.

22 Bergen County is one of the best at
23 helping people that need help. We're always there,
24 all of our divisions that deal with the epidemics,
25 Human Services, Health Services, everything,

1 Addiction Services, they're just wonderful, and I'm
2 glad that this Board continually supports these
3 efforts to help people, because like I say every
4 time, you hear me say it all the time, everyone
5 deserves a second chance in life.

6 Second is the Shared Services Agreement
7 where the county will now provide vehicle maintenance
8 and repair services on an as-needed basis with the
9 Borough of Little Ferry. We on the Board, we love
10 the opportunity to bring revenue and enhance services
11 and save the taxpayers money. This is what we do and
12 we have been talking about it for years and we been
13 talking about it since this administration took over.

14 Shared services saves money, period.
15 You cannot deny it. If you want to do home rule,
16 that's totally up to you, but anyone who is willing
17 to enter into a Shared Services Agreement, especially
18 with the equipment and whatever else the county can
19 provide that small towns can't, it's a win/win for
20 everybody. So I encourage all the municipalities to
21 get on board more so than they are right now.

22 Last week Sheriff Cureton and I
23 attended a candlelight vigil in honor and remembrance
24 of law enforcement officers and all victims who have
25 been killed in DUI and DWI accidents on our roadways.

1 They read the names of people over the
2 X number of years who have been killed due to DWI and
3 DUI. There's no need for it anymore. I mean,
4 there's Ubers everywhere, somebody is going to be a
5 designated driver. So we all need to do a better job
6 and make sure we don't get let anybody get behind the
7 wheel after having a few cocktails.

8 I want to thank the Police Traffic
9 Officers Association in Bergen County for hosting,
10 and to all the member of law enforcement who put
11 their lives on the line every day to keep us safe.

12 The Christmas season is upon us, as
13 today we lit the tree in the lobby of One Bergen
14 County Plaza. The end of the year is time for
15 everyone to reflect on this past year and thank all
16 of our staff who deliver to our residents on a
17 regular basis.

18 I also want to thank the Senior Choir
19 from the Southwest Senior Center who led us in
20 carolling this afternoon.

21 Mr. Farash brought up the light rail.
22 I was invited to a roundtable with the Governor to
23 talk about issues in the State of New Jersey.
24 Unfortunately, it got canceled. That was on
25 December 2nd. But I was invited because of my

1 campaign to bring the light rail to Bergen County so
2 we just don't keep calling it the Hudson Light Rail.

3 When I was Chairman last year, I wrote
4 numerous letters, and the County Executive and I and
5 the rest of the Commissioners did a lot of work to
6 try to make this a reality. So when we sit down on
7 the rescheduled meeting with the Governor, that will
8 be No. 1 on my list of topics.

9 Finally, we had a Moment of Silence for
10 Dolores Phillips, who was president of CWA
11 Local 1089, the workers at the Bergen County Board of
12 Social Services. Dolores was a dear friend, a great
13 union president, and just a great person. We're all
14 friendly with her on this Board and we all on this
15 Board are going to feel her loss. Personally I will,
16 dealing with her over the last two contracts with CWA
17 and also being her neighbor in Montvale. She was on
18 our committees in Montvale, and she was just a
19 wonderful, wonderful person. I just want to say to
20 her family, that we are with you and we're sorry for
21 your loss and God bless Dolores. She did a great job
22 in her time here serving.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
25 Commissioner Sullivan.

1 Commissioner Amoroso.

2 VICE CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

3 First of all, I just want to say kudos
4 to our election officials and all of our poll
5 workers. We got through this election in fine
6 manner. The numbers are 263,000 votes handled on
7 Election Day, and then another 112,000 votes during
8 early voting. We had new machines and we were
9 training people like crazy on them, and it worked
10 out, at least in terms of getting the vote there.

11 Secondly, I want to offer
12 congratulations, as I'm sure we all do, to the new
13 incoming president of Felician University, Dr.
14 Mildred Mihlon, who is to be installed this week in
15 her new position.

16 Thirdly, this is the season when we
17 express gratitude to our wonderful county employees
18 who minister on behalf of different segments of our
19 one million residents.

20 First thing I did this week, I went to
21 a very cute event for Human Services, "Thanks a
22 Latte." And it was really well done. They had a
23 little bistro scene on the TV monitor and you could
24 make your own coffee. It was a really nice, warm
25 event, as was the Christmas tree lighting.

1 As County Executive said, our employees
2 are our family and we are so happy to spend time with
3 them.

4 Our employees will be able to attend a
5 special employee afternoon/evening at Winter
6 Wonderland, which is our big to-do in the wintertime
7 at Van Saun Park.

8 Today I was able to go to the Northwest
9 Bergen Senior Center, and I have to tell you, I
10 experienced the performance of the syncopated
11 seniors. All of these ladies wearing the tap shoes,
12 and they were great. They did line dancing. Oh, my
13 Lord, they were so good. They made me ashamed of my
14 own abilities, let me tell you.

15 Finally, I do want to point out a
16 couple of donation drives that are available at One
17 Bergen County Plaza lobby downstairs, first floor.

18 Now through December 16th, the Bergen
19 County Division of Child Care Resources is collecting
20 new unwrapped toys as a part of their holiday project
21 this year.

22 Through December 15th, United Service
23 Workers Union Local 655 is also collecting new
24 unwrapped toys now through January 21st.

25 Bergen County Project Homeless Connect

1 is collecting new coats, hats, gloves, scarves,
2 sweatpants, sweatshirts, winter socks, and full-sized
3 toiletries like shampoos, toothpaste, deodorant, and
4 soap. And folks really do appreciate it.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you.

7 Commissioner Tanelli.

8 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: Thank you,
9 Chairwoman.

10 So people have mentioned individually
11 Winter Wonderland. Friday kicked off our Winter
12 Wonderland for this year. It's open Fridays,
13 Saturdays, and Sundays, and for the week of Christmas
14 and Hanukkah we will have extended hours. Please go
15 to BergenCountyWinterWonderland.com for ticket and
16 hour information.

17 I would just like to take a second to
18 introduce everyone to our December Veteran of the
19 Month, William Brown, Jr., of Englewood. Lt. General
20 Brown was a distinguished United States Air Force
21 pilot and commander with a career spanning 34 years
22 and is Bergen County Veteran of the Month for
23 December. He served as commander of the Allied
24 Forces in Southern Europe and Deputy Commander of the
25 U.S. Air Force in Southern Europe, amassing over

1 5,100 hours of fly time. A veteran of the Korean and
2 Vietnam wars, he flew 225 combat missions, piloting
3 F86 Sabres and F4 Phantoms. Born in the Bronx, Brown
4 graduated from Dwight Morrow High School in '45 and
5 earned a bachelor's degree from Penn State.

6 Fascinated by aviation at a young age, he joined the
7 Air Force and became a pilot in '51.

8 His education including an advanced
9 program at USC, Harvard Business School, and military
10 institutions like the Air Force's Staff College.

11 Promoted to Lt. General in '82, Brown's
12 accolades included the Distinguished Service Medal,
13 Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air
14 Medal, and Purple Heart. He also received Penn
15 State's Distinguished Alumni Award in '81.

16 He retired in '84, spent his post
17 military years with his wife of 66 years, Gloria, and
18 their three children. He passed away on June 4,
19 2020, at the age of 92, leaving a legacy of service
20 and inspiration.

21 We thank William for his service to our
22 nation and honor his memory.

23 Again, if you'd like to nominate a
24 veteran for Veteran of the Month, please contact me.
25 It's really simple to do. We want people, especially

1 our youth, to know the people that are walking
2 amongst us and what they've done for our country so
3 that we can share the freedoms that we share.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Thank you,
6 Commissioner Tanelli.

7 I'm kind of limited here what I'm left
8 with, I don't want to repeat.

9 December 1st is World AIDS Day, and New
10 Bridge Medical Center generally has a very nice
11 event. For all the individuals that have passed away
12 due to HIV and AIDS, they have made these amazing
13 quilts. So these quilts, they had them all at the
14 memorial commemoration of those who have AIDS or
15 those who we have lost to AIDS and all the work they
16 continue to do at New Bridge Medical Center and
17 Buddies of New Jersey. I just want to thank them for
18 their unwavering commitment to all those in need and
19 for the incredible job that New Bridge Medical Center
20 does with their Health and Wellness Center that's
21 dedicated to the LGBTQ+ community, and for the great
22 job that Dr. Awwad has really taken on at that
23 center.

24 So it was a beautiful and it was a very
25 sad moment, but it's a great way to remember those

1 who we lost.

2 Also right after that, I got the
3 opportunity to go to Bergen Family Center and I was
4 invited by my friend, Paula Tenebruso, she's the
5 supervisor of HIV and AIDS services from Bergen
6 Family Center. At every national World AIDS Day, she
7 gathers most of her clients, she likes to have a
8 luncheon for them. She invited me and she invited
9 Tim Eustace, who used to be our Assemblyman, to
10 discuss a lot of the fears, what's going to be
11 happening with the new administration. They wanted
12 to hear from local, state, and federal how they will
13 be affected. So it was a very nice luncheon that
14 they were able to attend.

15 As Commissioner Tanelli said, we went
16 to Winter Wonderland. We're all excited. Not only
17 do we have skating and we have now over like 20
18 vendors who are selling crafts, we also have Let It
19 Glow, which is beautiful lighted lanterns at the
20 Bergen County Zoo. And this year, in addition, they
21 have a whole new area just for bumper cars. It was
22 definitely quite an experience. I saw the excitement
23 of the kids and it is a great way to kickoff the
24 holiday season.

25 Talking about food, I also wanted to

1 thank the NAACP for their turkey distribution, the
2 Center For Food Action, PBA 134, Inserra, and the
3 Sheriff's Department, everyone that was involved in
4 distribution of turkeys and food for all our
5 families.

6 On that note, I also wanted to
7 congratulate Tracy again, well deserved. I'm so
8 proud of you. You've done so much, so much, on food
9 insecurity and you deserved the award. It was a
10 beautiful ceremony.

11 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Thank you,
12 Chairwoman.

13 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: Lastly, we had the
14 opportunity also to have Polish Independence Day.
15 Mr. Duch was one of our speakers. You did a
16 wonderful job. It was such a beautiful event. We
17 had dancers, singers, and the best part was
18 definitely the delicious cuisine. But we celebrated
19 their independence, since they regained it in 1918,
20 so it was definitely a beautiful celebration and it
21 was a packed room. There is a lot of Polish
22 ethnicity here in Bergen County.

23 Lastly, in regards to food, I sponsored
24 Resolution #1412 with Mary Amoroso. This resolution
25 is to support and focus on Meals on Wheels to

1 underscore the importance of providing essential
2 nutritional support to vulnerable populations,
3 especially seniors, homebound individuals, those with
4 disabilities, and assuring their dignity,
5 independence, and overall well-being.

6 For Bergen County residents, this
7 initiative is not about delivering food, it's a
8 lifeline that fosters community, reduces isolation,
9 and promotes public health.

10 On that note, I'd like to wish everyone
11 Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and I know we have
12 our Sine Die in two weeks, but just in case, I want
13 to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season.

14 Adjournment

15 CHAIRWOMAN ORTIZ: On that note, there
16 being nothing further to come before this meeting, I
17 move to 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 7:49 p.m.

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(Whereupon, the Public Meeting is
adjourned at 7:49 p.m.)

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

I, KIM O. FURBACHER, License No. XIO1042, a Certified Court Reporter, Registered Diplomate Reporter, Certified Realtime 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.



KIM O. FURBACHER, CRCR, CCR, RDR
License #XIO1042, and Notary Public
of New Jersey

My Commission Expires:
7/11/2029