

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
JANUARY 11, 2023- 7:00 P.M.  
HELD AT THE OAKLAND SENIOR CENTER  
20 Lawlor Drive, Oakland, NJ  
[www.oakland-nj.org](http://www.oakland-nj.org)

Pursuant to Chapter 231, Public Law 1975 (Open Public Meetings Act) adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by:

- ❑ Adoption of an annual schedule of meetings
- ❑ Posting a copy of same at Borough Hall and the Borough's website
- ❑ Advertised in The Record more than 48 hours in advance of the meeting
- ❑ Mailing a copy to any person requesting same

**\*\* MEETINGS CONCLUDE AT 10:30 P.M., THEREFORE, NO TESTIMONY WILL BE TAKEN AFTER 10:00 P.M.**

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS:

Andrew Gissonna, Edward Clark, Andrea Levy, Joseph Marscovetra, Michael Rose, Thomas Connolly, Lee Haymon, Gregory Liss, Councilman Talamini, Mayor Eric Kulmala and Chairman Thomas Potash.

FLAG SALUTE, MEETING OPENED AT 7:01 P.M., ROLL CALL:

Present Members: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.

Absent Members: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

EXCUSE ABSENCES:

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Liss, to excuse the absences of Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon was voted unanimously by the Board.

Mr. Joseph Russo, Esq., Board Attorney, Steve Lydon, Burgis Associates and John Yakimik, Boswell Engineering were in attendance.

BOARD PROFESSIONALS SWORN IN:

None

Mr. Clark sitting in for Mr. Haymon, Mr. Gissonna sitting in for Ms. Levy.

OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, to open the meeting to the public for matters not on the agenda was voted unanimously by the Board.

No comments.

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, to close the meeting to the public for matters not on the agenda was voted unanimously by the Board.

ESCROW AND BUDGET REVIEWS:

Chairman Potash reviewed the escrow and the contract budget balances with the Board and professionals.

PUBLIC HEARING:

None

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD:

CHAIRMAN:

Motioned by Mr. Marscovetra and seconded by Mr. Liss, to nominate Thomas Potash as Chairman to the Board.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss and Mayor Kulmala.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

VICE CHAIRMAN:

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, to nominate Gregory Liss as Vice Chairman to the Board.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

SECRETARY:

Motioned by Mr. Liss and seconded by Mayor Kulmala, to nominate Joseph Marscovetra as Secretary to the Board.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Chairman Potash announced that two firms submitted RFQ's for Board Attorney. The firms consist of King, Moench and Collins, LLP, and Uscher, Quait, Uscher and Russo. Both firms are qualified, and rates are comparable. The committee recommends that the Board continue to retain Uscher, Quait, Uscher and Russo as Board Attorney since Mr. Russo has done an outstanding job assisting the Board for over 30 years. He entertained a motion.

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Liss, to appoint Uscher, Quait, Uscher and Russo as Board Attorney for 2024.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

BOARD ENGINEER:

Chairman Potash announced that two firms submitted RFQ's for Board Engineer. The firms consist of Neglia Engineering and Boswell Engineering. Both firms are qualified and have comparable fees. The committee recommends that the Board continue to retain Boswell Engineering as the Board Engineer and continue to have John Yakimik represent the Board. He entertained a motion.

Motioned by Mr. Connolly and seconded by Mr. Liss, to appoint Boswell Engineering as Board Engineer for 2024 and John Yakimik as their representative.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

#### BOARD PLANNER:

Chairman Potash announced that three firms submitted RFQ's for Board Planner. The firms consist of Neglia Engineering, T & M Associates and Burgis Associates. All firms were qualified and had comparable fees.

He explained that Neglia's rates were higher with less experience, so they were eliminated right away. T&M Associates also has higher rates and less experience with affordable housing and Highlands. Burgis Associates has the most experience with affordable housing and Highlands and has the lowest rates. Mr. Haymon, away on vacation, was part of the RFQ Committee and he emailed the committee recommending that the Board continue to retain Burgis Associates.

However, it was requested by Mayor Kulmala that the Board retain the Borough's Planner, T&M Associates, so the Board and the Council will be in unison with planning for the downtown area. Mayor Kulmala explained that he discussed his direction for the downtown area with Chairman Potash and Mr. Liss which he and Caroline Reiter have been working on and thinks it is better to stick with the same planner. He expressed that the change means nothing personal to Burgis Associates, he just has a different direction and believes the Planning Board and Council be in unity. Chairman Potash requested any feedback from the Board. Mr. Rose expressed that he is not in favor of the change. Mr. Liss expressed that he respects the experience and skill of Burgis Associates but agrees that a change from time to time can be a positive thing. No further discussion. Chairman Potash entertained a motion.

Motioned by Mayor Kulmala and seconded by Mr. Liss, to appoint T & M Associates, Inc. as Board Planner for 2024 and Caroline Reiter as their representative.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.  
Nays: Mr. Rose  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

Motioned by Mayor Kulmala and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, to appoint Kathy Gurney as Recording Secretary to the Board.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER:

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, nominating The Bergen Record as the Official Newspaper for the Board.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

BY-LAWS:

Chairman Potash announced that the By-Laws will be tabled for a few minor corrections and re-submitted to the Board.

MEMORIALIZATIONS:

1. Kusala Care LLC – 27 Muller Road, Block 301, Lot 2. Approval for Preliminary and Final Site Plan Review.

Mr. Russo informed the Board of corrections made to the resolution. No further discussion. Chairman Potash entertained a motion.

Eligible voters: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Marscovetra, Connolly, Liss and Chairman Potash.

Motioned by Mr. Liss and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, to memorialize the above resolution of approval.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Marscovetra, Liss and Chairman Potash.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Ms. Levy and Mr. Connolly.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Motioned by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Liss, to pay the bills subject to the availability of funds.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss, Mayor Kulmala and Chairman Potash.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

Absent: Mr. Haymon and Councilman Kulmala.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

December 14, 2023 Minutes:

Motioned by Mr. Liss and seconded by Mr. Marscovetra, to approve the December 14, 2023 Minutes as amended.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Messrs. Gissonna, Clark, Rose, Marscovetra, Liss and  
Chairman Potash.

Nays: None

Abstain: Mayor Kulmala

Absent: Ms. Levy, Messrs. Connolly and Haymon.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Yakimik updated the Board on an upcoming application for a minor subdivision.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Yakimik updated the Board that Lannar Builders are requesting two changes be made after the approval for the Ridings as Ramapo development. One is to make each building larger in width by 1-foot and eliminate the building for the pump station. A discussion ensued concerning an increase of impervious surface. Mr. Yakimik responded that he would adjust the calculations and inform the Board on his findings.

PUBLIC MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:05 P.M.

Motioned by Mr. Liss and seconded by Mr. Rose, to adjourn the meeting by a unanimous vote by the Board.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kathlyn Gurney, Administrative Assistant

\*Next meeting on February 8, 2024