

**MINUTES OF THE BOROUGH OF EAST RUTHERFORD
MAYOR & COUNCIL
SINE DIE MEETING HELD ON
DECEMBER 27, 2016**

THE SINE DIE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR CASSELLA AT 7:11PM. FLAG SALUTE WAS HELD AND THE FOLLOWING OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT WAS READ:

This meeting is the Sine Die Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of East Rutherford and is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law. This meeting was transmitted to the three newspapers listed below on December 9, 2016, posted on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building and has remained continuously posted as the required notices under the Statute. In addition, a copy of this notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

The Herald News

The Record

The Bergenite

ROLL CALL:

Councilmember	Present	Absent
Brizzi	X	
Homaychak	X	
Lahullier	X	
Perry		X
Stallone	X	
Ravettine	X	

Also present were Borough Clerk Danielle Lorenc, Attorney Richard Allen and Engineer Glenn Beckmeyer

Mayor Cassella recognized Congressman Pascrell and welcomed him to East Rutherford. Congressman Pascrell then came forward and gave to presentation to Councilman Brizzi for his years on the Council. He wished the best of luck to both Councilman Brizzi and Councilman Homaychak as well as Councilman elect Cronk and Councilman elect Sorbera.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

RECREATION – COUNCILMAN STALLONE

Councilman Stallone wished everyone a happy new year.

COURT – COUNCILMAN RAVETTINE

Councilman Ravettine wished everyone a happy new year.

FIRE DEPARTMENT/SQUAD – COUNCILMAN LAHULLIER

Councilman Lahullier wished everyone a happy new year.

ENGINEER’S REPORT – GLENN BECKMEYER

Engineer Beckmeyer updated the Council on the flooding situation around BJ’s. He has met with representatives from BJ’s as well as representatives of the NJSEA. It has been productive and is moving forward.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT – RICHARD ALLEN

Attorney Allen stated that his report was given during the regular meeting as well as in Executive Session. He thanked the Council for the past 8 years that he was able to serve.

Mayor Cassella thanked Councilmen Brizzi and Homaychak for all of their years of service. He wished them both health and success.

FINANCE/DPW/TECHNOLOGY/BD OF ED – COUNCILMAN HOMAYCHAK

Councilman Homaychak stated that his report was given during the regular meeting. He thanked the people of East Rutherford for allowing him to serve 12 years on the Board of Education and 3 years on the Council.

Completed / Ongoing Investigations:

- 82 Motor Vehicle Accident Reports
 - 19 Fire Emergencies
 - 62 Medical Emergencies
 - 954 Total Calls for Service
-

Councilman Brizzi also read the monthly construction office report as well as the monthly ordinance enforcer reports – all of which are on file in the Clerk’s office for review.

Councilman Brizzi asked that the borough continue to look into an elevator for the Municipal Building as well as better accessibility at the Civic Center.

Councilman Brizzi gave a presentation of plaques to Officer Marino Rotondo, Chief Larry Minda and former employee Loretta Stoebling.

Councilman Brizzi gave the following speech:

Good evening Mayor and good evening everyone that came this evening it's greatly appreciated. I see many friends, family and Borough employees. It's been quite a long run for me serving as a councilman in this great Borough. I can remember being elected to my first term being sworn in on January 1st. Just three short days later we were hit with a 30 inch snowfall and I was serving as commissioner of the public works and can remember the DPW truck picking me up in front of my house late in the evening and spending the entire evening watching our Public Works guys at work. I figured if I was going to represent the DPW then I wanted to know exactly what it was that they did and how they did it. And I can tell you they did a great job through the wee hours of the night. I also learned immediately about contract negotiations having had to negotiate a contract with the public works in my first year which yielded a reasonable contract that was fair to the municipality and employees.

During my years on the council and being part of the Cassella Team we achieved many great things. I'd like to mention some of them to remember all the progress that took place during my years on the council. We had our first recycled material playground built at Mackenzie Park. In fact it was covered by the Bergen Record at the time as being a first of its kind. We also built the first gazebo made from recycled materials in what is now the 911 Park. Much of that credit goes to then recycling coordinator Mark LaGala. Mark was very creative and we made a great team. That Gazebo was relocated to the park at the end of

Everett Place on Railroad Ave. This past year Mike and I coordinated a planting through the local Daisies brownies, girl scouts, the Becton High school environmental club and Viridian Energy. Almost 100 volunteers showed up to plant flowers, rake leaves, cleanup debris and mulch the entire area. All materials and plants were donated from Terre supply, Outdoor Living, Meadowlands True Value and the Daisies, Brownies and Girl Scouts

There were many major accomplishments as well. The first major project was the renovation of McKenzie and Riggins Field. This was no easy task and at the time we were criticized by many but much of the credit should go to Mayor Cassella. He was an avid athlete in high school and his goal was to improve the sports and recreation fields for our children and community. The council at the time stepped up and we made it happen. And in turn most communities surrounding East Rutherford then installed turf fields not many years after. With the amount of use and the amount of programs that go on today and the cost of maintaining real grass fields installing turf is the right decision.

We also focused on ridding our community of junk yards and run-down buildings. A couple that I could remember are USA recycles on Clinton Place, 2 Carlton Ave, the electric motor factory on Hackensack and Union Aves and the radiator shop and used car lot on Carlton Avenue which now is home to the Veterans Park, Sesselman Park and our Band Shell. The Band shell Park was slated for 75 Condominiums which the Casella Team fought and wound up purchasing the land with grant money that was also used for the renovation. We did the Park Avenue and Paterson Avenue streetscape which included the 911 Park we also renovated and built Fireman's Park on Randolph and Paterson Avenue probably the finest fireman Memorial Park throughout New Jersey.

We introduced Redevelopment into the community which included Lowes and the strip mall North of Lowe's on Route 17. Becton and Dickinson closed its headquarters in East Rutherford and left a hole on Hackensack Street and something needed to be done. We then, through smart development negotiated Liberty Commons and later Liberty Terrace. That same property now houses the new East Rutherford police station and court. I would say that is the finest Public Safety building you will see in any state. It took 10 years to find the right location and finally get an area that we all agreed on.

We then renovated Grove Street playground, Lillian Pearson Park and St Joes Park. There was the acquisition and renovation of the Herman Street Firehouse, upgrades to DPW building which most recently included ventilation to provide safe work environment the DPW workers. We also have one of the best DPW depts. around and what I believe the finest services one could ask for.

Finally we were able to stop paying rent for the Building Dept. on Paterson Ave by renovating and settling into the old Police building on Grove Street. Then we relocated the VFW to the ground floor of Borough Hall.

I was also fortunate to have negotiated 5 police contracts without ever having to go to mediation or arbitration. I had the honor to have been involved in hiring almost all of the of the current 38 police force members. One of my proudest affiliations in my life was to be police commissioner of the East Rutherford Police Department. I believe we have the finest police force around. I thank you for that opportunity gentlemen. Working with Chief Minda has been an absolute honor and pleasure. He is a Hands-On chief whose heart is planted in this community. Sorry you couldn't be here with us tonight chief. There are so many great guys that I've had the pleasure of working with on the police force. I especially want to recognize officer Marino Rotondo who is retiring at the end of the month.

Danielle Micci Lorenc you've always been a great help and a pleasure to work with. Anything I've ever asked for you've always been there for me and I appreciate that.

Cindy and Tamar whom were both recently added to the borough hall staff, you are both a great asset to our community and I loved working with you.

To my good friend Frank Recanati and the building department it's been a pleasure working with you all these years. We have really accomplished a lot in remodeling and revamping the entire department. Moving forward with the joint Building Department I see many more efficiencies and cost-savings down the road. I wish you all the best.

To our professionals to Dick Allen, Glenn Beckmeyer, Mike Neglia, Remington Vernick, Paul Garbarini and Jimmy Gardella at PIA you always made us look good by doing the right thing for our community.

To the employees of our court. Judge Savino, Andrew Cimiluca, Rich Potter, Daryll, Nancy and Maggie thank you for your dedication to East Rutherford. You help make it a safer place.

I like to thank the members of our volunteer fire department and emergency Squad. Your countless hours of training and service to our community never went unnoticed.

I would also like to recognize Linda, Kathy and Maurice in our tax depts. Thank you for your dedication to our town.

To John Giancaspro and Bill Jones you were always so proficient at your jobs behind the scenes. It was very much appreciated. I especially would like to thank Bill Jones for getting me into this mess in the first place. It was Bill and his parents that made me want to get into politics.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the great senior citizens of East Rutherford. I have always enjoyed attending your meetings and your affairs. You are the Cornerstone of East Rutherford.

A very special thank you to our Veterans. It was an honor to always attend your services with great respect for all you have done for our country and do for our community.

Thank you as well to all of those that volunteer and serve on our boards. Our coaches, our team parents and all the youth that participated in our programs over the years. I have watched young men and women that I coached in Softball, T ball and Babe Ruth grow up and become police officers, dads, moms and professional men and women. I am proud of you.

Mayor Cassella you have been a great friend and mentor. You are the epitome of an honest, hard-working elected official that never did this for anybody but the people of this community. I will miss working with you on a daily basis. I feel honored to have been taught by you and I thank you for that.

And to the people that helped me get here and help me year after year, the residents of East Rutherford I thank you for your constant support. Although this may be a brief break I will never forget your support.

My proudest and best moments as a councilman was bringing outdoor concerts to the borough 11 years ago and the Outdoor Concerts on Park 2 years ago. I was a staunch proponent of the band shell on Carlton which is now used for so many events including weddings and prom pictures. This is something this community will never forget.

Being a Councilman in East Rutherford to me has always been about the Community First. I never had issue with a difference of opinion. Whether it was with renovating the fields or buying property for a bus turnaround difference of opinion is part of running a community.

I will only say this about this year's election. I was falsely accused of putting East Rutherford for sale. None of the accusations we're either true or accurate. My family has been in East Rutherford for 95 years and I was born and raised in this community. I love this community like I love my family. I would never do anything to jeopardize my my community or my reputation as a Councilman.

Now I would like to thank the most important people in my life. My family. First I would like to thank my grandmother who would have been a 104 years old yesterday. She was my first inspiration for a hard work ethic.

I would like to thank my dad who gave me my people skills and brought me to this great community. To my daughter Raquel and my son JT I thank you for

always putting up with the life of politics. I also thank you for your unwavering support. I love you both. And to my wife Jamie I thank you so much for putting up with my many evenings of meetings and so many weekends having to be home for parades or events. You were always there and never once complained about any of it. I love you and look forward now to being able to make our family and our business my #1 priority.

I am walking out of here tonight proud of my accomplishments, my integrity and my honesty in serving this borough. I will walk out of here with my head held high.

Thank you again for all of you that came out tonight to show your support of my dedication to this community. I wish you all a Happy New Year and hope you had a great holiday season.

Mayor Cassella asked for a motion to open the meeting to the citizens for public questions/comments:

Moved: Councilman Stallone
Second: Councilman Lahullier
Roll Call: All Ayes

Mayor Cassella asked if any citizen wished to be heard.

Sherrill Curtis (Uhland Street) on behalf of Access for All thanked Joel and Mike for all their dedication.

Frank Recanati (Construction Official) congratulated the new Council members. He thanked Joel, Mike and Dick Allen for their years of service.

Mayor Cassella asked for a motion to close the meeting to the citizens for public questions/comments:

Moved: Councilman Stallone
Second: Councilman Lahullier
Roll Call: All Ayes

Mayor Cassella invited former assemblyman Paul DiGaetano to stay a few words.

Mayor Cassella asked for a motion to adjourn into Executive Session at 7:59PM for personnel:

EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the “Open Public Meetings Act” requires that a public body adopt a resolution at an open meeting before going into Closed Session to discuss a matter which excludes the public as permitted under Section 7b;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council will hold a closed meeting at 7:59 p.m. on Tuesday, December 27, 2016 in Borough Hall to discuss the following matters:

1. Personnel

WHEREAS, minutes will be kept and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, then the minutes can be made public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Borough of East Rutherford that the public be excluded from this portion of the meeting.

Moved: Councilman Lahullier

Second: Councilman Stallone

Roll Call: All Ayes

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Cassella asked for a motion to close the Executive Session and reopen the public meeting at 8:27PM:

Moved: Councilman Lahullier

Second: Councilman Stallone

Roll Call: All Ayes

A motion was made to amend the contract with Chief Minda for an additional six months in which he will receive a 2% raise in 2017 and the borough will pay 100% of his health benefits (due to the fact that upon retirement the borough would be paying 100% of the benefit costs):

Moved: Councilman Homaychak

Second: Councilman Stallone

Roll Call: Ayes – Homaychak, Stallone, Ravettine, Lahullier

Absent – Brizzi, Perry

Mayor Cassella asked for a motion to adjourn the Sine Die meeting at 8:29PM:

Moved: Councilman Homyachak
Second: Councilman Stallone
Roll Call: All Ayes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danielle Lorenc". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

Danielle Lorenc, RMC