

PARAMUS ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
BOROUGH OF PARAMUS
JOCKISH SQUARE
PARAMUS, NEW JERSEY 07652

Chris DiPiazza
Mayor

Date: Monday January 12, 2026

Location: Borough Hall Caucus room

- I. Notification of meetings as required by "The Open Public Meetings Act."
- II. Meeting called to order 7:05 PM
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Roll Call
 - a. Tom Caiaffa Absent
 - b. Tom Donahue Present
 - c. Elisa Giblin Present
 - d. Sofiya Haque Absent
 - e. Susan Maemari Present
 - f. Denis Niland Present
 - g. Robert Riccoboni Present
 - h. Councilman Antonio Present
- V. Approval of minutes
 - a. December 8, 2025
 - i. Motion:
 - ii. Second:
 - iii. All in favor
- VI. Council Report
 - a. Swearing in of Tom Donahue and Robert Riccoboni
 - b. Mayor and Council is working on getting a planning board liaison for the next commission meeting
 - i. Will be mandatory
- VII. Planning Board report – N/A
- VIII. Communications
 - a. ANJEC membership – who would like to join?
 - i. Tom Donahue, Elisa Giblin and Denis Niland
 - b. One open vacancy for full term member
 - i. Tom Donahue – can we promote it on Facebook?
 - ii. Elisa Giblin – can we ask someone who works for DPW to be on?
 1. Councilman Antonio – they have to be a resident
 2. Elisa Giblin – he is a resident
 3. Nicole Smith – not sure employees can apply
 4. Elisa Giblin – Chris at the recycle center is great
 5. Councilman Antonio – will check and get back to
 - c. End of year report – 2025
 - i. Meeting times, roster, budget transactions \$5,489.83 spent
 - ii. Money remaining from donations
 - iii. Information will be available after approval
 - iv. Tom Donahue asked why more we spent so much more on second clean up vs first clean up
 1. Food and bagels were donated for the first clean up but not second
 - a. Portion of funds for clean communities is used for this
 - b. Elisa Giblin – asked if they can see the listing on what was spent for the clean community's grant
 - i. Nicole Smith advised that this is not an Environmental commission grant but a DPW grant so it would need to be requested if not, OPRA'd

- ii. Information is listed in the end of year report
 - v. Farmers market – May 30th through July 5th and closed
 - 1. Brought in \$1710 and spent \$7,640.97 which included refunds due to the cancelled season
 - 2. Tom Donahue – what did we spend on?
 - a. Nicole Smith – supplies, band, ads, tables, uniforms, banners, overtime, refunds
 - 3. Elisa Giblin – how much do they pay to be apart of market?
 - a. Have to peddlers permit which depends on what they have and \$30/week
 - 4. Tom Donahue – was it \$1,710 in sales?
 - a. Nicole Smith – we don't make money off the sales this was strictly for rent from participating vendors
 - 5. Elisa Giblin – vendors got back part of the \$1,700?
 - a. Nicole Smith – only vendors that paid for the Fall season as it was cancelled
 - b. How long are the hours?
 - i. Nicole Smith – 9am – 3pm
 - c. Came out of what funds?
 - i. Nicole Smith – Farmers Market trust account
 - ii. Elisa Giblin – is there money in that now?
 - 1. Nicole Smith – will need to ask Sheri, unsure if they cancelled the trust since we closed it
 - iii. Elisa Giblin – we have to find out how much is in that trust account maybe we can put it towards Earth Day
 - 1. Nicole Smith – it is a trust and can only be used what it is allotted for, I.E. farmers market
 - vi. Initiatives participated in
 - 1. Food scrap composting project
 - a. 41 users
 - b. 2,501 lbs. of trash diverted
 - c. Spent \$4,512 – out of clean communities
 - 2. Book recycling
 - a. Brought in \$224.21 for year – minus December as they are a month behind
 - 3. Styrofoam Collection
 - a. 4,242 lbs. sent out
 - b. Brought in \$1,994
 - c. Bob Riccoboni – so now we are paid up for everything? We had to pay for shed etc.
 - i. Nicole Smith – not yet
 - ii. Bob Riccoboni – that money came out of the town?
 - 1. Nicole Smith – came out of tonnage grant
 - 2. Bob Riccoboni – so there is no debt?
 - a. No debt just repaying ourselves back

IX. Old Business

- a. 2026 Meeting dates revisions
 - i. Change dates and time to 1st Wednesday of the month
 - 1. Motion: Bob Riccoboni
 - 2. Second: Elisa Giblin
 - 3. All In favor
 - ii. March 4th and April 1st will need another secretary because Nicole Smith will be unavailable
- b. Saddle River Project updates
 - i. Tom Donahue – we did not get the grant. Still trying to figure out why.
 - ii. Ridgewood says Paramus was not included and that was one of the reasons we didn't get the grant
 - iii. Councilman Antonio – we did everything we needed to and gave it to the county who was running the grant and we didn't hear back. We have documentation though.
 - 1. Bob Riccoboni – did the county get it?
 - a. No
 - iv. Tom Donahue – able to resubmit and will work on that with Ridgewood

- v. Bob Riccoboni – I was contacted by the lawyer who is working with Dave Rifkin – he is representing the residents of Ridgewood for the Costco building. Called to tell that a Paramus resident is suing the town of Paramus because the process for passing the permits was done improperly. Did not notify residents
 1. Elisa Giblin – he is suing two or three other towns too
 2. Bob Riccoboni - Ridgewood community is working to present a second case
 3. Tom Donahue – Costco passed?
 4. Bob Riccoboni – approved by DOT once they approve the town doesn't have many options. This person doesn't live anywhere near the site.
 5. Susan Maemari – residents want to be reimbursed. Do we think this will stop Costco from coming?
 - a. Bob Riccoboni – they may get tired of it and pull out of the project
 6. Tom Donahue – so if DOT stamps the project, if no one in town wants it, it doesn't matter?
 - a. Denis Niland – depends on how it is zoned
 - b. Councilman Antonio – it is zoned for that. Not trying to make it housing or anything.
 7. Tom Donahue – what would the outcome be of suing?
 - a. Bob Riccoboni – it would delay the project

X. New business

- a. Bylaws – any updates?
 - i. Tom Donahue – what is the timeline for that?
 1. Nicole Smith - There really is no timeline
 2. Tom Donahue – will take another look. If that can be sent to us all again to review. Will make a share doc for everyone to access.
 - a. Nicole Smith – boro does not have access to that and per sunshine laws everything must be OPRA'able so the main storage would need to be the office.
 - i. Everything needs to be open to public and discussed in meeting otherwise could be considered null and void
- b. Tom Donahue put together priorities and presented on projector
 - i. Fall and Spring clean ups
 - ii. Paramus Community Day – formerly known as Earth Day
 1. Community block party focused on sustainability and also Paramus 104th birthday
 2. Need a time – maybe after baseball games
 3. Partnership with other commissions to make it a 360 interdepartmental celebration
 - a. Shade tree
 - b. PD
 - c. Fire
 - d. Mayor and Council
 - e. DPW
 - f. Pool
 - g. Recreation
 - h. Elisa Giblin – can we get together with all of them so they know what we would like to do and how they can help?
 - i. Tom Donahue – after this meeting start reaching out to the departments to let them know. Do we have the library locked in?
 - i. Nicole Smith – yes but there is an application, started filling out but still needs some approvals. If vote on name change we can send to mayor and council
 - ii. Susan Maemari – that means we would need to change the banner and artwork and flyers
 1. Elisa Giblin – the high school designs the flyers
 2. Nicole Smith – the office has been designing the flyers we just need to know for sure the high school is going to do them. We changed it because they weren't turned in, in the time frame we needed.
 3. Susan Maemari – have a back up plan
 - iii. Motion to change name: Elisa Giblin
 1. Second: Bob Riccoboni
 2. All in favor
 - iv. Elisa Giblin – when do we need to get the new banner by?

- v. Nicole Smith – you have to find someone to make a banner because now it is all new information I am unsure if the traffic department is able to do an entirely new banner. So, you would need 3 quotes from 3 different companies.
 - vi. Elisa Giblin asked who gets the quotes and was advised that they should be getting the quotes.
 - vii. Councilman Antonio – how much is the banner and is it just one banner?
 - 1. Nicole Smith – depends on their budget
 - viii. Elisa Giblin stated they had never gotten quotes before and asked Councilman Antonio if they have the authority to get quotes. Is that their job? And are their 3 people that the town uses?
 - 1. Nicole advised this is because they have always used the same banner and just updated it. listed Next day signs, Niland signs (unsure if he still does), do not have a third.
 - 2. Councilman Antonio – it depends on how much you spend and that anyone can get a quote just cannot sign it to authorize it
 - ix. Denis Niland asked if there would be something referencing Earth day on it so residents and vendors know
 - 1. Tom Donahue stated it will have something about sustainability listed
 - 2. Bob Riccoboni stated that instead of putting it as a block party just put “celebrating sustainability” or something along those lines and work with HS on tag lines
 - x. Nicole Smith asked if it would be a problem if there are no funds for a new banner and suggested possibly holding off on a name change until next year.
 - 1. Bob Riccoboni asked how much money is left from donations
 - a. \$400 or so
 - b. Bob asked if they can take any that was left over from the clean up
 - i. Nicole advised no that is not allowed
 - c. Elisa Giblin – the grant cannot be used for Earth day?
 - i. No, these funds are for recycling matters only
 - xi. Tom Donahue – asked for list of everything that they need and if they can get a donation. And how much everything costs.
 - xii. Bob Riccoboni – maybe we can get sponsors and list them at the bottom
 - xiii. Elisa Giblin – asked if we can get money for this? How do we go about that?
 - xiv. Councilman asked where these banners go? – only one banner and it goes over Farview Ave.
 - xv. Bob Riccoboni asked if they could do one across from library.
 - xvi. Councilman Antonio advised that there are no poles and only a certain amount of set locations to do that. 8 locations total
 - xvii. Need a design/lettering/etc.
4. Spoke to Councilman Wilkins to see about coordinating with the little league and maybe they can get a free ice cream if they show up in their uniform
 - a. Bob Riccoboni – what time are the games over? – TBD
5. Elisa Giblin – we usually get a list of the trucks for food and vendors to approach
 - a. Councilman Antonio – for food vendors recommend reaching out to boro clerk closer to the date
 - b. Nicole Smith – usually reaches out to her but not needed. All they need is to fill out the peddler permit and submit that so if it is someone new they just need to complete that.
- iii. Environmental Resource inventory
 - 1. Figure out a subcommittee
- iv. Collaborations
 - 1. Truck and learn – partner with public works
 - a. Road show events with trucks for the kids and talk about recycling with the kids
 - b. Nicole and Councilman Antonio – like a touch a truck: town hosts a few of these a year and DPW goes around to schools and organizations to give a lesson on recycling
 - c. Elisa Giblin asked if we could do a touch a truck for Earth day

- c. \$52.50 – food and meals
- d. Plus the left over \$400 from donations
 - i. What used to be done is that the commission would get donations from different organizations in town for Earth day. Must be check donation directly to the office.

c. Social Media

- i. Consolidate into monthly themes
- ii. Create a calendar of content posting once a week related to that theme and maybe once before the meeting inviting community to the meeting
- iii. Posts will be sent to Monday afternoons for review and then will be posted by Tuesday
- iv. Elisa Giblin – who does the town recycling calendar? Can we do May an Earth day post and the clean ups?
 - 1. Nicole Smith – that would be DPW. A new theme is done every year and we did event this year and there was an earth day flyer and pictures from the Earth Day contest. Can put it in as a suggestion but we may not do pictures at all next year. Posted in calendar for all of those
- v. Councilman Antonio – do we know how many people are signed up for recyclecoach? Can you send out alerts?
 - 1. Nicole Smith – yes, we can send out alerts for special events
 - 2. Bob Riccoboni – who gets that?
 - a. Nicole Smith – anyone who signs up for the app on their phones
- vi. Cross posting and tagging people to get visibility
- vii. Collab with high school to get a student to write something or post
- viii. Kick off in February – new year new habits: educating the community on recycling and proper disposal of junk – pushing recycle coach would be great
 - 1. what is at the recycle center?
 - 2. What you can/cannot recycle?
 - 3. Signing up for text reminders
 - 4. March = water conservation/river health/partnership with Veolia
 - 5. April = clean up promotion/reminders/how to sign up

XI. Nominations for Chair

- a. Elisa Giblin = nominate Tom Donahue as chairman
- b. second – Denis Niland
- c. All in favor

XII. Nominations for Vice chair

- a. Elisa Giblin – nominate Robert Riccoboni
- b. Second – Tom Donahue
- c. All in favor

XIII. Adjournment 8:15 PM

- a. Motion: Tom Donahue
- b. Second: Bob Riccoboni
- c. All in favor

Respectfully Submitted
 Nicole Smith
 Environmental Commission Secretary