

**Workshop Meeting
Borough of Eatontown Governing Body
Wednesday, July 13, 2022**

*This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act: A notice of the meeting has been published in the Asbury Park Press, Star Ledger and the Link News, posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of Borough Hall, and posted to the Borough website.
Public comment is welcome at any time.*

Mayor Talerico opened the Workshop at 7:06 pm, noting the Borough's compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act

1. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Anthony Talerico, Jr., Council President Kevin L. Gonzalez,
Councilmembers Mark Regan, Jr., Maria Escalante, Danielle M. Jones, David Gindi, Everett D. Lucas
ALSO PRESENT: Attorney Bayer, Interim Administrator Lucia, Borough Clerk Martin
The Flag Salute was led by Councilmember Gindi

2. Proclamation: What Eatontown Means to Me

Mayor Talerico gives background on the essay competition. Essay winner Ahtziri Valverde reads her essay. Mayor Talerico explains to Ahtziri what she has won and reads the Proclamation into the record as follows:

PROCLAMATION - RECOGNIZING AHTZIRI VALVERDE FOR HER WINNING ESSAY "WHAT EATONTOWN MEANS TO ME"

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the Borough of Eatontown seeks to instill hometown pride in its residents and wishes to promote Eatontown as a great place to live and raise a family; and

WHEREAS, the Eatontown Historical Committee sponsored an essay contest for Eatontown eighth-graders to write about "What Eatontown Means To Me," sharing their appreciation of growing up in Eatontown; and

WHEREAS, students entered the contest sharing the many reasons for which they have pride in their community and are happy to make Eatontown their home; and

WHEREAS, among the participants, the Eatontown Historical Committee has selected Ahtziri Valverde as the winner of the 2022 "What Eatontown Means To Me" essay contest and awarded her with a \$100 prize; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the Borough of Eatontown and the Eatontown Historical Committee wishes to memorialize Ahtziri Valverde's efforts and congratulate her and her family.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Governing Body of the Borough of Eatontown congratulates Ahtziri Valverde for her winning essay and encourages all students to share their pride and love for Eatontown in all that they do.

Following the reading, pictures with Ahtziri Valverde were taken.

Interim Administrator Lucia arrives at 7:14pm.

3. Proclamation: Vito Ruffino Day

Mayor Talerico invites any of the councilmembers to speak about Mr. Ruffino. Councilmember Regan speaks about Mr. Ruffino and acknowledges him on being a dedicated member of the community. Councilmember Lucas shares his appreciation for Mr. Ruffino and reflects on his friendship with him. Councilmember Gonzalez reflects on Mr. Ruffino's accomplishments, his dedication to the community and appreciates Mr. Ruffino's kindness and generosity. Mayor Talerico speaks on Mr. Ruffino's countless hours in the Lions Club serving projects around town and bringing in new people into the club to continue the generation. Mayor Talerico reads the proclamation as follows:

PROCLAMATION - RECOGNIZING THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE OF VITO RUFFINO

WHEREAS, we are here today to express special recognition to Mr. Vito Ruffino and to celebrate his distinguished career as the proprietor of Ruffino's Pizza & Italian Restaurant; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, Vito Ruffino opened and operated Ruffino's Pizza and Italian Restaurant serving the Eatontown Area for forty-seven-year years as the oldest Italian restaurant in the Borough, and often donating his time, food, and proceeds from his restaurant to countless programs within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, in a time when volunteers are sometimes hard to find, Vito Ruffino has given many years of volunteer service to the Borough of Eatontown, serving on countless town committees and community organizations, among them, the Eatontown Alliance for the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse, The Eatontown Recreation Advisory Committee, and The Eatontown Lions Club; and

WHEREAS, As Chairperson of the Lions Playground Committee, Vito Ruffino's leadership and guidance have helped the Eatontown Lions Club champion their challenger playground project at Leon Smock 80 Acres Park. The all-inclusive park will provide a new activity for area families and children with special needs; and

WHEREAS, the entire Borough Council expresses their sincere appreciation to Vito Ruffino for his dedication to the Borough of Eatontown and wishes him much happiness as he begins this exciting new chapter in his life.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Borough of Eatontown gratefully acknowledges Vito Ruffino's contributions to his community and appreciates the time, effort, and expertise that he has devoted to the Borough of Eatontown; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, I, Anthony Talerico, Jr., Mayor of the Borough of Eatontown, on behalf of the Borough Community, thank him for his devotion to the Borough and praise him for his accomplishments and do hereby proclaim July 10 as Vito Ruffino Day in the Borough of Eatontown and do hereby commend this observance to all of our citizens.

Following the reading, pictures with Vito Ruffino were taken.

Mayor Talerico announced that agenda items will be taken out of order, moving agenda number 5 to number 4.

4. Property Tax Card – Shop Local

Mayor Talerico shares the background and history of this program. Company owner, Carmine DiFalco provides the background of his company, explains how this program works and its fees. Mayor Talerico asked about the fee for the Tax Card and how they go about getting a sponsor. Mr. DiFalco responded giving several options. Councilmember Gonzalez asked a question regarding how the corporations in town will get involved. Mr. DiFalco responded. Mayor Talerico asks the other councilmembers if they have any general questions. Councilmember Lucas asked if they publish a listing of all the organizations that are in the program. Mr. DiFalco responded. Councilmember Lucas asked a question regarding if Eatontown gets credit for using the card in another town. Mr. DiFalco responded, and Mayor Talerico clarifies the response. Councilmember Escalante asked a question regarding business owners and their role in the program. Mr. DiFalco responded. Mayor Talerico clarified the response. Councilmember Gindi asked if they have any case studies from the business side perspective showing increase in the business revenue. Mr. DiFalco responded. Mayor Talerico asked if the business owners have a penalty for leaving or if they can leave at any time. Mr. DiFalco responded. Councilmember Gonzalez clarified on Councilmember Lucas' question regarding using the card in another town. Councilmember Gonzalez then asked about residents having a card registered in another town. Mr. DiFalco responded. Councilmember Gindi asks if the marketing for this program is the Borough's responsibility. Mr. DiFalco responded. Councilmember Gindi asks if the company handles the implementation at the retail level. Mr. DiFalco responded. Councilmember Gindi asked if they have an advertising deck that the Borough can use. Mr. DiFalco responded. Mayor Talerico asked if the Council is interested in this program. Councilmember Gonzalez responded showing his concern about how they get the residents and businesses involved. Councilmember Gonzalez shared that he's cautiously optimistic about the program but spoke with Mr. Olsavsky and his research on the matter. Councilmember Gindi stated he reached out to two non-resident potential retail partners and shared that they are willing to sign up on an advertising program. Mayor Talerico asked Interim Administrator Lucia to include in his next meeting report and address any further questions and recommendations so we can move forward if desired. Councilmember Regan expressed some concerns regarding the restaurant industry and the 9.1% inflation rate. Mayor Talerico suggested for Councilmember Regan to reach out to the City of Long Branch and get feedback from the Administrator George Jackson, as well as other towns that have this program. Mr. DiFalco addresses Councilmember Gonzalez's questions regarding the expenses of marketing and the efficiency of the program. Councilmember Gindi asked about the discount the residents will receive. Mr. DiFalco responded. Mayor Talerico asked Mr. DiFalco if he will send all information regarding this program to the Municipal Clerk, Julie Martin via email so then they may distribute the information to Council. Councilmember Jones asked Mr. DiFalco for his email address. Councilmember Lucas comments on the new restaurants coming to the Monmouth Mall.

5. FMERA Plan Amendment #19 – Howard Commons

Mayor Talerico provides the background of this plan. Mayor Talerico asks the Council if they have any comments or concerns regarding this plan. No comments or concerns were made.

Mayor Talerico opens to public comment on workshop items only. No comments were made.

Mayor Talerico moved Closed Session to the end of the Regular Meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT – 7:56pm

Motion to adjourn by C/Gindi; seconded by C/Escalante

Voice Vote: AYE - C/Gonzalez, C/Regan, C/Escalante, C/Jones, C/Gindi, C/Lucas



By: Julie Martin, RMC, Borough Clerk

Exhibits are on file in the Borough Clerk's Office, according to the NJ State Records Retention Schedule established by NJSA 47:3-15 *et seq* and approved by the State Records Committee. Audio is available on the Borough website.

Approval 07/27/2022