MINUTES
Regular Council Meeting
Monday, August 10, 2026
Council Chambers 7:30pm

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Council President Criscuolo called the meeting to order at 7:37pm.

SALUTE TO FLAG

Council President Criscuolo asked all in attendance to join him in a Salute to the Flag.

SUNSHINE LAW STATEMENT

Council President Criscuolo read the Sunshine Statement into the record, as follows:

"In accordance with the provisions set forth in the Open Public Meetings Law, notification of this meeting has been sent to all officially appointed Township newspapers and notice is posted at the Municipal Office and on the Township website."

ROLL CALL

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, Council Vice President Sieg and Council President Criscuolo were present.

Also present: Mayor Mark Bromberg, Business Administrator/CFO Gennaro Rotella, Township Attorney Silvana Raso, Township Engineer Chris Statile, and Township Clerk Karen Campanelli.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Bromberg reported that last Wednesday the Police Department held their Ice Cream with a Cop event. The event was well attended, everyone had fun and he thanked the Police department for hosting.

The Mayor next reported that the Township received the Auditor's report and once again there was only one minor correction. He congratulated the CFO/Business Administrator for putting the books together and keeping everything straight.

Mayor Bromberg commented that this afternoon he attended a meeting of the Pascack Valley Mayors Association who invited Congressman Josh Gottheimer to discuss flooding issues. The Mayor explained that several Towns had conducted a drone study and determined that something needs to be done. The Mayors Association discussed with Congressman Gottheimer securing federal funding for this area of the Pascack Valley to help execute some tangible efforts to help mitigate the flooding. He added that the first phase of the project would be de-snagging the waterways.

He concluded that there are several Fire Department officials present this evening to discuss the new ladder truck.

Council Comments

Councilmembers Tolomeo, Ben-Yishay and Council Vice President Sieg had no comments.

Council President Criscuolo commented that the next order of business is the appointment a new Council person due to the recent resignation of John Donovan. He explained that John has sold his home and moved out of town. Council President Criscuolo thanked Councilman Donovan for all his efforts over the years. He added that this is not an easy job and often you have to make difficult decisions. It also takes time away from your family and other obligations. Council President Criscuolo thanked Councilman Donovan for being a very valuable part of the dais for a long time and he will be missed.

Council President Criscuolo next announced that they need to appoint a new Councilperson. He explained that the County Committee has gone through the process of selecting three individuals and two of those have subsequently withdrawn. He further reported that they do have one individual

here this evening, Joe Ziccarelli who is applying for the open Council position. Council President Criscuolo invited Mr. Ziccarelli to introduce himself, and to talk about himself and his background.

Joe Ziccarelli, 702 Rockridge Road has been a River Vale resident for 26 years. He and his wife raised their three sons since kindergarten in town. Mr. Ziccarelli was very excited to report that his oldest son has just purchased a home in River Vale, for his wife and his new grandson.

Joe commented that he has been involved with the Town from early on having three athletic sons and was very quickly asked to get more involved and join both the Football Board and Baseball Board. He served as the Treasurer for seven consecutive years on both Boards. Joe added that he served under the Presidency of Chris O'Shea and Jim Tolomeo.

He further commented that he has a finance background and worked for large financial institutions on Wall Street for 30 plus years. Today, he is in the luxury home building business in Greenwich Connecticut working with a friend that was also a partner on Wall Street.

Joe added that he loves living in River Vale and moved here because it felt like a small Town. He explained that being involved public service through the sports organizations you learn very quickly what happens managing lots of people, parents and children. His goals were simple and being from a finance background he was always concerned about the dollars. He added that he always wanted to make sure the associations were looked after accordingly, the kids got everything they needed, and safety was always a priority.

Councilman Tolomeo added that Joe was already the Treasurer for RVJFA when he took over for Chris.
He had the pleasure of working with him, knows him personally very well and can vouch for him.

Councilman Ben-Yishay also knows Joe very well, he shamboozled him into becoming the Treasurer for the Football Association for seven years.

Council Vice President Sieg commented that she's sure Joe is a wonderful person, but this happened very fast and she likes to do her homework. She gave him credit for volunteering his time with the sports organizations and thinks it's great he held the position of Treasurer. Councilwoman Sieg added that her husband coached, and her son was involved in sports and understands that a lot goes on behind the scenes.

She just wished she had more time and it has nothing to do with whether he is capable or not, but she doesn't want to be rushed into a decision.

Council President Criscuolo had no questions.

Council President Criscuolo made a motion adding a Resolution to the Agenda appointing Joe Ziccarelli to fill the open Council position.

Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay, second by Councilman Tolomeo on the Resolution.

Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay, second by Councilman Tolomeo to open to the Public on this Resolution.

There being no questions or comments from the Public, motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay second by Councilman Tolomeo to close the meeting to the Public.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, and Council President Criscuolo voted yes. Council Vice President Sieg abstained.

Mayor Bromberg swore in Joe Ziccarelli as a Councilman. Councilman Zicarelli then took his seat on the dais.

Business Administrator Report

Mr. Rotella reported on the 2025 Audit, adding that it is a team effort that involves every department in the municipality. He next reported on Resolution 182 which is for the Golf Course kitchen improvements. He explained that the kitchen equipment is well over 30 years old and overdue for an update. He further explained that they are hiring a consultant that only works on kitchen facilities for Country Clubs to make them more efficient and user-friendly.

Mr. Rotella next commented on Resolution 183 Cancelling Escrow Balances. He explained that some of the balances go back to 2001 and they can no longer find the individuals. He has consulted with the Auditors, and they are looking to cancel the balances and remove them from the bank statements.

He reported that they have an RFP out for the Golf Course Management contract. It's been five years since the last RFP and proposals are due September 1st.

Council Vice President Sieg had a question regarding the designer of the kitchen, and if there are issues or problems how is the Town protected. Mr. Rotella responded that the designer has 35 years of experience and also designed the kitchen at the Edgewood Country Club.

Council President Criscuolo questioned Resolution 183, reversing the balances back into income and asked if we are confident that they are not owed to anyone. Mr. Rotella responded that they have tried and been unsuccessful at locating them. Council President Criscuolo would like to check on this before they do it and if you can't locate them the funds should be turned over to the State and they become the custodians. Mr. Rotella will check with the Auditors.

Township Engineer Report

Mr. Statile reported that the all the paving associated with the Road Program will be done by the end of the week. The contractor will then come back to do the striping. Mr. Statile added that the project is coming in under the contract total.

He spoke to Rich Campanelli amount the design of the new DPW storage building and he or one of his staff will sit down with Rich to discuss the project further.

Mr. Statile reported that the contractor for the tennis courts plans on paving tomorrow and in a month the contractor will return to coat and stripe the courts.

Council Vice President Sieg asked if Alpine and Bailey will get paved due to the all the utility work. Mr. Statile responded he would send up one of his inspectors to follow up on the work.

1st Hearing of the Public

Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay second by Councilwoman Sieg to open the meeting to the public.
All in Favor: Aye

There being no questions or comments from the public. Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay second by Councilman Tolomeo to close the hearing of the public.
All in Favor: Aye

RESOLUTIONS

Council President Criscuolo tabled Resolution #2026-183 Authorizing the Cancelling Escrow Balances.

Motion by Councilman Tolomeo second by Councilman Ben-Yishay to approve Resolutions #2026-166 through Resolution #2026-184 with the exception of Resolution #2026-183 as a Consent Agenda as follows:

Resolution #2026-166

RESOLUTION APPROVING MINUTES JULY 13, 2026, COUNCIL MEETING

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale, that the minutes of the July 13, 2026, Council meeting of the Township Council are hereby approved.

Resolution #2026-167

RESOLUTION GRANTING TAX EXEMPT STATUS DISABLED VETERAN

WHEREAS, Thomas Tillison, who resides at and is an owner of 767 Orangeburgh Road (Block 202, Lot 21.02) in the Township of River Vale has been deemed a 100% permanently disabled veteran in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.30; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Tillison made the appropriate claim for tax exemption through the River Vale Tax Assessor's Office as a 100% permanently disabled veteran and was approved effective July 13, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Tillison submitted an official letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs with the River Vale Tax Assessor confirming this information; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Tillison owns 50% of the property therefore only 50% of the property taxes will be exempt.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the property known as 767 Orangeburgh Road(Block 202, Lot 21.02) is hereby designated as a 50% tax-exempt property as the property owner, Thomas Tillison, is a 100% permanently disabled veteran effective July 13, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that 50% property taxes on said property are hereby cancelled.

Resolution #2026-168

RESOLUTION APPROVING CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 2025 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT BROOKSIDE AVENUE SIDEWALKS (INCREASE)

WHEREAS, on September 8, 2025, the Township of River Vale awarded the 2025 Pedestrian Safety Improvement Project contract to Cedar Contracting Co., Inc., 621 N. Union Avenue, Hillside, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, there was a change during the project due to increases in material costs, resulting in an increase to the contract sum.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale, that Change Order No. 1 for the above-mentioned project be approved as follows:

Original Contract Sum	$ 174,368.30
Change Order No. 1 Increase	+ 30,740.97
New Contract Sum	**$ 205,109.27**

Resolution #2026-169

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE MAYORAL APPOINTMENT OF THE

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Mayoral appointment of the following individual to the Office of Emergency Management is hereby confirmed

Name	**Position**
William MacRae	OEM Coordinator

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OEM Coordinator's term is for three (3) years effective January 1, 2026, and expires December 31, 2028.

Resolution #2026-170

REFUND

(Junior Golf Clinic Registration Fee)

WHEREAS, the following individual is requesting a refund of their Junior Golf Clinic Registration fee; and

WHEREAS, the Treasurer has certified the availability of funds in the Golf Operating Account.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of the River Vale that said refund is approved, and the Treasurer is hereby authorized to issue a municipal check payable as follows:

Payable to:
Stacey Park
102 E. Madison Avenue
Cresskill, NJ
Refund Amount: $ 650.00

Resolution #2026-171

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CANCELLATION OF A DUPLICATE TAX SALE CERTIFICATE IN MUNICIPAL RECORDS

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector of the Township of River Vale has notified the Governing Body that a duplicate Tax Sale Certificate has been generated and recorded in the municipal computer system Edmunds; and

WHEREAS, the duplicate record exists for the property/parcel designated as:

- **Block:** 301.01
- **Lot:** 2.01
- **Property Address:** 860 Rivervale Road River Vale, NJ 07675
- **Tax Sale Certificate No.:** 1699998

WHEREAS, upon review, it has been verified that this is an error and a duplicate record of Tax Sale Certificate No. 1699998, which was previously voided on October 21, 2016; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54:5-111.1 and the Municipal Tax Collector authorize the governing body to cancel erroneous liens and certificates of record.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Township of River Vale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. **Cancellation Authorized:** The Tax Collector is hereby authorized and directed to cancel the duplicate Tax Sale Certificate No. 1699998 in the municipal tax records and software system.
2. **Record Update:** The Tax Collector and/or Edmunds GovTech shall update the municipal computer systems to reflect the removal of this duplicate lien, ensuring it is stricken from the active tax rolls.

Certified Copies: A certified copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Tax Collector, and the Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution #2026-172

RESOLUTION APPROVING CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 SOYKA SMITH DESIGN STUDIOS NEW PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX (INCREASE)

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2022, the Township of River Vale awarded a contract to Soyka Smith Design Studios , 52 Watchung Avenue, Upper Montclair, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, there were changes during the project due to added storage fees, additional shelving, and labor costs resulting in an increase to the contract sum.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale, that Change Order No. 1 for the above-mentioned project be approved as follows:

Original Contract Sum	$ 590,222.84
Change Order No. 1 Increase	+ 55,704.52
New Contract Sum	**$ 645,927.36**

Resolution #2026-173

AWARD A CONTRACT CIVIL SOLUTIONS

(Digital Tax Maps)

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2026, the Township received a proposal for the preparation of digital Tax Maps, GIS support and certification of the maps to be in compliance with the New Jersey Division of Taxation; and,

WHEREAS, the proposal received from Civil Solutions, 215 Bellevue Ave., Hammonton, New Jersey has been reviewed and is hereby accepted at the price of

Amount: $ 49,500.00

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Offer has certified the availability of funds in the Current Fund Account.

NOW THEREFORE BE RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Business Administrator is hereby authorized to sign a contract with Civil Solutions for the preparation of digital tax maps for the Township as detailed in the proposal.

Resolution #2026-174

AWARD CONTRACT TO EAW SECURITY FOR THE INSTALLATION OF AN

ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM (New Public Safety Complex)

WHEREAS, on July 27, 2026, the Township received a proposal for the installation of an Access Control System at the New Public Safety Complex; and,

WHEREAS, the proposal received from EAW Security, 1601 North Main Street, Suite 118, Warrington, Pennsylvania has been reviewed and is hereby accepted at the price of

Amount: $ 20,665.05

NOW THEREFORE BE RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Business Administrator is hereby authorized to sign a contract with EAW Security for the installation of an Access Control System at the New Public Safety Complex as detailed in the proposal.

Resolution #2026-175

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2025 AUDIT

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4 requires the governing body of every local unit to have made an annual audit of its books, accounts, and financial transactions; and

WHEREAS, the Annual Report of Audit for the year 2025 has been filed by a Registered Municipal Accountant with the Township Clerk as per the requirements of N.J.S.A 40A:5-6, and a copy has been received by each member of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey is authorized to prescribe reports pertaining to the local fiscal affairs, as per R. S. 52:27BB-34; and

WHEREAS, the Local Finance Board has promulgated a regulation requiring that the governing body of each municipality shall by resolution certify to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that all members of the governing body have reviewed, as a minimum, the sections of the annual audit entitled:

General Comments

Recommendations

and

WHEREAS, the members of the governing body have personally reviewed as a minimum the Annual Report of Audit, and specifically the sections of the Annual Audit entitled:

General Comments

Recommendations

as evidenced by the group affidavit form of the governing body; and

WHEREAS, such resolution of certification shall be adopted by the governing body no later than forty-five days after the receipt of the annual audit, as per the regulations of the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, all members of the governing body have received and have familiarized themselves with, at least, the minimum requirements of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey, as stated aforesaid and have subscribed to the affidavit, as provided by the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, failure to comply with the promulgations of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey may subject the members of the local governing body to the penalty provisions of R.S. 52:27BB-52 - to wit:

R.S. 52:27BB-52 - "A local officer or member of a local governing body who, after a date fixed for compliance, fails or refuses to obey an order of the director (Director of Local Government Services), under the provisions of this Article, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction may be fined not more than one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in addition shall forfeit his office."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of the Township of River Vale hereby states that it has complied with the promulgation of the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey dated July 30, 1968, and does hereby submit a certified copy of this resolution and the required affidavit to said Board to show evidence of said compliance.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE
COPY OF THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL AT THEIR REGULAR
MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 10, 2026

Resolution #2026-176

WHEREAS, the 2025 Annual Audit of the Township of River Vale, conducted by Lerch, Vinci & Bliss, LLP contained recommendations requiring action; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has reviewed the recommendations and prepared a Corrective Action Plan for the 2025 Annual Audit, responding to the Audit Recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Corrective Action Plan has been reviewed by the members of the Governing Body of the Township of River Vale.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township of River Vale 2025 Corrective Action Plan is hereby approved by the Governing Body of the Township of River Vale and approved for submission to the Division of Local Government Services.

Resolution #2026-177

R E S O L U T I O N

CHAPTER 159

FY 2026 MUNICIPAL RECYCLING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4087 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any municipality when such item has been made available by law and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of River Vale hereby requests that the Director of Local Government Services approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget for the year 2026 in the sum of $10,329.05 which is now available from the 2026 Municipal Recycling Assistance program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the sum of $ 10,329.05 is hereby appropriated under the caption of Public and Private Programs.

Resolution-178

R E S O L U T I O N

CHAPTER 159

FY 2026 Clean Communities Grant

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4087 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any municipality when such item has been made available by law and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of River Vale hereby requests that the Director of Local Government Services approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the budget for the year 2026 in the sum of $ 3,716.77 which is now available from the 2026 Clean Communities Grant program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the sum of $ 3,716.77 is hereby appropriated under the caption of Public and Private Programs.

Resolution #2026-179

RESOLUTION URGING THE RESTORATION OF ENERGY TAX RECEIPTS

WHEREAS, taxes on gas and electric utilities were originally collected by host municipalities to be used for local purposes and to compensate the public for the use of their rights-of-way; and

WHEREAS, when the State made itself the collection agent for these taxes, it promised to dedicate the proceeds to municipal property tax relief; since, just as municipalities collect property taxes for the benefit of school districts, counties, and other entities, the State is supposed to collect Energy Taxes for the benefit of municipal governments; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the State has diverted significant portions of these revenues for State budget purposes rather than returning them to municipalities as originally intended; and

WHEREAS, by keeping flat funding of the Consolidated Municipal Property Tax Relief Aid (CMPTRA) appropriation year after year, State budget makers have been able to continue collecting Energy Taxes while retaining revenues that should have been returned to municipalities to provide property tax relief; and

WHEREAS, in State Fiscal Year 2023, the State provided much-needed relief through the allocation of $75 million in Municipal Relief Funds; and

WHEREAS, in State Fiscal Year 2024, the State allocated $150 million in Municipal Relief Funds; however, in State Fiscal Year 2025 and as proposed in State Fiscal Year 2026, no such allocation exists; and

WHEREAS, in State Fiscal Year 2024, the Energy Tax Receipts Program should have received more than $350 million to restore municipalities to 2008 funding levels; however, the State's diversion of Energy Taxes has continued to grow, creating an even larger financial gap; and

WHEREAS, the cumulative impact of years of flat funding and underfunding has left many municipalities with serious fiscal challenges and burdensome property taxes; and

WHEREAS, local elected officials are in the best position to determine the most effective use of these resources, which were always intended to support local programs and services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that the Township calls for the immediate restoration of funding diverted from energy taxes for local use.

BE IT FURTHER ESOLVED, that the Township of River Vale respectfully calls upon State policymakers to end the diversion of municipal resources to support State spending and to restore

this important source of funding intended to help relieve the property tax burden borne by New Jersey residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor Mikie Sherrill, Lieutenant Governor Dale Caldwell, State Treasurer Aaron Binder, Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs Jacquelyn A. Suarez, Senate President Nicholas Scutari, Speaker of the Assembly Craig Coughlin, Senator Holly T. Schepisi, Assemblyman Robert Auth, Assemblyman John V. Azzariti, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

Resolution #2026-180

RESOLUTION URGING STATE LEADERS TO IMPLEMENT FAIR AND EQUITABLE REFORMS TO MITIGATE THE UNSUSTAINABLE INCREASES IN HEALTH BENEFIT PREMIUMS FOR PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

WHEREAS, the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP), governed by N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.25 et seq., offers medical, prescription drug, and dental coverage to qualified State and participating local government public employees, retirees, and eligible dependents; and

WHEREAS, all SHBP plans are self-funded, meaning that the money paid out for benefits comes directly from an SHBP fund supplied by the State, participating local employers, and member premiums; and

WHEREAS, participating local government employers, including the Township of River Vale, continue to experience significant increases in health insurance premiums, creating substantial budgetary challenges and placing additional financial burdens on taxpayers and employees; and

WHEREAS, during budget testimony regarding SHBP costs, State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio indicated that future premium increases could be comparable to the substantial increases experienced in prior years; and

WHEREAS, such proposed rate increases will significantly impact local property taxpayers as well as public employees during a period of persistent inflation and economic uncertainty; and

WHEREAS, despite innovative cost-containment measures taken by municipalities to provide affordable and quality healthcare coverage for valued employees and their families, public sector health benefit plans remain increasingly expensive; and

WHEREAS, long-term structural reforms are needed to address the sustainability of the SHBP, including but not limited to eliminating costly plan designs, modifying co-pays for specialists and urgent care, restricting the use of out-of-network healthcare coverage and GLP-1 drugs where appropriate, implementing a Reference- Based Pricing System, streamlining the use of Health Savings Accounts and Flexible Spending Accounts, and enhancing medical transparency and data collection; and

WHEREAS, failure to implement meaningful reforms may leave municipalities with limited options, including hiring freezes, elimination of budgeted positions, reductions in services, and increased property taxes for residents.

NOW, THERFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that the State leaders are respectfully urged to implement fair and equitable reforms to mitigate the unsustainable increases in health benefit premiums for public sector employees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the State Treasurer, the President of the New Jersey State Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, Senator Holly T. Schepisi, Assemblyman Robert Auth, Assemblyman John V. Azzariti, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

Resolution #2026-181

RESOLUTION URGING THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL RELIEF TO MUNICIPALITIES FOR THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE 100% DISABLED VETERAN PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey provides a full exemption from property taxation for honorably discharged veterans who have been declared by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to have a service-connected disability rated as 100% permanent and total pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.30 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale recognize and strongly support the sacrifices made by disabled veterans and their families in service to the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the increasing number of qualifying disabled veteran property tax exemptions results in a reduction of the Township's ratable tax base, thereby placing additional financial pressure upon municipalities and non-exempt taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, municipalities are responsible for maintaining essential public services, including police, fire protection, emergency medical services, sanitation, road maintenance, recreation, and other critical operations, all of which rely heavily upon local property tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, exempt properties remain a part of the funding calculations of local school districts and municipalities remain responsible for funding local school district obligations absent the corresponding revenue from exempt properties; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey mandates the exemption but does not currently provide municipalities with sufficient reimbursement or aid to offset the resulting loss of ratable property tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale believe that the State should share in the financial responsibility for this important veterans' benefit in order to ensure that municipalities remain fiscally stable while continuing to honor disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale urge State policymakers to pass legislation, including Assembly Bill A273 and Senate Bill S1568, or any successor legislation, requiring the State to reimburse municipalities for the cost of disabled veterans' total property tax exemptions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT **RESOLVED,** by the Mayor and Council of the Township of River Vale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that the State Legislature and Governor of New Jersey are respectfully urged to establish a program of direct reimbursement, dedicated State aid, or other financial relief measures to compensate municipalities for local revenue losses associated with the 100% Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such relief be structured in a fair and equitable manner based upon the assessed valuation of exempt veteran properties within each municipality.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township of River Vale respectfully urges State policymakers to enact legislation requiring the State to reimburse municipalities for the cost of disabled veterans' total property tax exemptions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor Mikie Sherrill, Lieutenant Governor Dale Caldwell, State Treasurer Aaron Binder, Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs Jacquelyn A. Suarez, Senate President Nicholas Scutari, Speaker of the Assembly Craig Coughlin, Senator Holly T. Schepisi, Assemblyman Robert Auth, Assemblyman John V. Azzariti, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

Resolution #2026-182

AWARD CONTRACT DRYDEN DESIGNS

(Design Services RVCC Kitchen Renovation)

WHEREAS, on May 4, 2026, the Township received a proposal for design services regarding the renovation of the River Vale Country Club kitchen facilities; and,

WHEREAS, the proposal received from Dryden Designs, 6 Fairfax Avenue, Wilton Connecticut has been reviewed and is hereby accepted at the price of

Amount: $ 18,000.00

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Offer has certified the availability of funds in the Golf Course Capital Account.

NOW THEREFORE BE RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Business Administrator is hereby authorized to sign a contract with Dryden Designs for the provision of design services for the renovation of the kitchen facilities at the River Vale County Club as detailed in the proposal.

Resolution #2026-184

Payment of Bills

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the Business Administrator is hereby authorized to pay the following claims:

CURRENT ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 327,454.44
RESERVE CURRENT ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 1,719.96
GOLF COURSE UTILITY OPERATING ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 165,492.12
RESERVE GOLF COURSE UTILITY OPERATING ACCT claims in the amount of:	
HOUSING TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 2,246.40
TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	
SNOW REMOVAL TRUST claims in the amount of:	
ANIMAL TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	
RECREATION TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 16,831.43
PRIVATE DUTY TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	
STATE & FEDERAL GRANT claims in the amount of:	$ 27,454.76
OPEN SPACE TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	
CAPITAL ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 25,791.34
UTILITY CAPITAL ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 9,555.58
ACCUMULATED ABSENCE TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	
PROJECT/BUILDERS ESCROW ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 3,063.00
PLANNING BOARD TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 165.00
SPECIAL TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 1,312.50
ZONING BOARD TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	

TOTAL CLAIMS TO BE PAID $ 581,086.53

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale that the following claims have been paid by the Business Administrator prior to the Bills List Resolution in the following amounts:

CURRENT ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 4,463,977.93
RESERVE CURRENT ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$ 186,075.00

GOLF COURSE UTILITY OPERATING ACCOUNT claims in the amount of	$	375,215.33
RESERVE GOLF COURSE UTILITY OPERATING ACCT claims in the amount of:		
HOUSING TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:		
STATE & FEDERAL GRANT claims in the amount of:		
PAYROLL AGENCY ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$	5,624.00
RECREATION TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$	22,263.00
OPEN SPACE TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:		
ACCUMULATED ABSENSES ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:		
UNEMPLOYMENT TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$	19,613.55
GOLF COURSE UTILITY CAPITAL ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:		
CAPITAL ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:		
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE TRUST claims in the amount of:		
TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$	140.00
PLANNING BOARD TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$	3,423.38
SPECIAL TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:	$	11,939.84
PERFORMANCE BOND claims in the amount of:	$	10.33
ZONING BOARD TRUST ACCOUNT claims in the amount of:		
TOTAL CLAIMS PAID	**$**	**5,088,282.36**
TOTAL BILLS LIST RESOLUTION	**$**	**5,669,368.89**

MANUAL DISBURSEMENTS BILLS LIST AUGUST 10, 2026

07/20/2026 Transfer Payroll	$ 376,868.49
TOTAL STATUTORY DISTRIBUTIONS	**$ 376,868.49**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, Council Vice President Sieg and Council President Criscuolo voted yes. Councilman Ziccarelli abstained.

Ordinances for 1st Reading

ORDINANCE #481-2026

Motion to Introduce: Councilman Tolomeo

Second: Councilman Ben-Yishay

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RIVER VALE, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER 142 OF THE CODE ENTITLED "LAND USE" ARTICLE LVII "DEFINITIONS'

ARTICLE LVII

Definitions

B. Definitions. For the purpose of this Part 9, the terms used herein are defined as follows:

ADD

CURRENT PROPERTY SURVEY—A property survey prepared by a licensed land surveyor that accurately depicts all existing improvements and site conditions and is dated no more than **five (5) years** prior to the submission of an application. Any survey that does not reflect all existing improvements or site changes shall not be considered current and must be updated or replaced.

This Ordinance shall take effect following adoption and approval in a time and manner prescribed by law.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, Council Vice President Sieg and Council President Criscuolo voted yes. Councilman Ziccarelli abstained.

Ordinance for 2nd Reading and Public Hearing

ORDINANCE #479-2026

Motion to Adopt: Councilman Tolomeo

Second: Councilwoman Sieg

Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay second by Councilwoman Sieg to open the Public hearing on Ordinance #479-2026.

There being no questions of comments from the public. Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay and second by Councilman Tolomeo to close the Public Hearing on Ordinance #479-2026.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RIVER VALE, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER 142 OF THE CODE ENTITLED "LAND USE" PART 5 "SHADE TREES" TO REMOVE ARTICLE XXVI SECTIONS 142-134 THROUGH 142 "SHADE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE" IN ITS ENTIRETY

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale, that Chapter 142 of the Township Code is hereby amended as follows:

Article XXVI **Shade Tree Advisory Committee**

~~§ 142-134 **Establishment; membership; terms; appointment.**~~

~~There is hereby established the Advisory Shade Tree Committee of the Township of River Vale. The Committee shall consist of seven members, three of whom shall be the Property Maintenance Officer and the Superintendent of Public Works and the Land Use Administrator. Their terms of office shall commence upon the day of their appointment. The terms of office of the additional five members shall commence upon the day of their appointment and be for the respective periods of one, two, three, four and five years, beginning on January 1 next succeeding such appointment. The terms of each appointee shall be designated in his or her appointment. All subsequent appointments, except to fill vacancies, shall be for the full term of five years, to take effect on January 1. The members shall be residents of the Township, appointed by the Mayor and shall serve without compensation except as hereinafter provided.~~

~~§ 142-135**Organization.**~~

~~The Committee shall organize within 30 days after the appointment of its total membership for the remainder of the then calendar year, and thereafter annually by the election of one of its members as Chairperson and the appointment of a Secretary, who need not be a member.~~

~~§ 142-136**Definitions.**~~

~~As used in this Part **5**, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:~~

~~**PERSON** Any individual, firm, partnership, association, corporation or other entity.~~

PUBLIC PLACE Includes any public street or highway, including the right-of-way, and any park, playground or other property or place owned by or under the control of the Township of River Vale.

TREE Trees of all types having a diameter of two inches or greater measured at a point 4 1/2 feet above the ground (diameter breast height) and any and all shrubs or hedges over three feet in height.

§ 142-137**Powers and duties.**

A.

The Advisory Shade Tree Committee shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all trees and shrubs within the right-of-way lines of public streets in the Township and is authorized to plant, remove, maintain and protect trees and shrubs within the right-of-way lines of public streets and highways and zoned Conservation Districts in the Township.

B.

To regulate and control the use of the ground surrounding the same so far as may be necessary for their proper growth, care and protection.

C.

Move or require the removal of any tree or part thereof dangerous to public safety. The Committee shall give reasonable notice of its intention to remove, or cause the removal of, a tree or part of a tree dangerous to public safety, unless public safety requires immediate removal, in which case no notice shall be necessary.

D.

To recommend to the Township the creation of amendments to or repeal of ordinances adopted by the governing body necessary or proper for carrying out the provisions hereof.

E.

To order treatment and/or removal of any tree situated upon private property which is believed to harbor a disease or insects readily communicable to neighboring healthy trees in the care of the municipality and to enter upon private property for that purpose with the consent of the owner thereof, provided that the suspected condition is first confirmed by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Department of Agriculture.

F.

To study and recommend methods of funding, outside of municipal taxation, by grants and aid, both state and federal.

G.

To develop a program of tree planting and overall beautification in areas along the public right-of-way and upon public property and to develop a master plan for the care and control of existing shade trees and ornamental trees and the planting of new trees throughout the Township. Said survey and master plan shall be submitted to Township Council for its review and approval annually, but in no event later than March 31 of the next succeeding year.

H.

To give advice relative to shade tree issues to the Township Joint Planning Board.

I.

To provide a procedure for removing or trimming existing trees where necessary because the tree is either dead, diseased or injured by storm or similar consequences.

§ 142-138**Cost of planting.**

The cost and expense of planting trees and for caring for trees which may have been planted or for which care has been provided by the Committee may be paid for by the Shade Tree Committee out of such money as may be appropriated from time to time by the Township Council.

§ 142-139**Permit required for certain activities.**

No person, except Township employees acting under instruction for the Township Council, shall do or cause to be done any of the following acts within the Township of River Vale street rights-of-way or the zoned Conservation District without a written permit issued by the Department of Public Works, on recommendation of the Property Maintenance Officer:

A.

Cut or trim any limb two inches or more in diameter, break, climb with spikes, disturb the roots of or otherwise injure or spray with any chemical or remove any living tree or shrub or injure, misuse or remove any structure or device placed to support or protect such tree or shrub.

B.

Plant any tree or shrub.

C.

Fasten any rope, wire, electrical attachment, sign or other device to a tree or shrub or to any guard about such tree or shrub, except support ropes or wire.

D.

Close or obstruct any open space provided about the base of a tree or shrub which will prevent access of air, water or fertilizer to the roots of such tree or shrub.

E.

Pile any building material or make any mortar or cement within six feet of a tree or shrub.

F.

Allow any herbicidal gaseous, liquid or solid substance to make contact with the stem or roots of any trees or shrub within the Township right-of-way.

G.

Top any tree, "topping" being defined as the severe cutting back on limbs to stubs larger than three inches in diameter within the tree's crown to such a degree so as to remove the canopy and/or disfigure the tree. Trees severely damaged by storms or other causes or certain trees under utility wires or other obstructions where normal pruning practices are impractical may be exempted from this chapter at the discretion of the Shade Tree Committee.

§ 142-140**Trees to be reduced to surface.**

Any person who has received written permission to remove any tree or shrub must reduce it to the surface of the ground.

§ 142-141**Interference with Advisory Shade Tree Committee.**

No person shall delay or interfere with any lawful work undertaken by the Advisory Shade Tree Committee or its authorized agent.

§ 142-142**Violations and penalties.**

Any person who shall violate any provision of this Part **5** shall be liable to a fine for the violation of each rule or regulation in the amount not exceeding $300 for each violation and/or a replacement of tree illegally removed. Summons for violation of this Part **5** are to be issued by the Property Maintenance Officer.

This Ordinance shall take effect following adoption and approval in a time and manner prescribed by law.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, Council Vice President Sieg and Council President Criscuolo voted yes. Councilman Ziccarelli abstained.

ORDINANCE #480-2026

Motion to Adopt: Councilman Tolomeo

Second: Councilwoman Ben-Yishay

Motion by Councilwoman Sieg second by Councilman Tolomeo to open the Public hearing on Ordinance #480-2026.

There being no questions of comments from the public. Motion by Councilman Tolomeo and second by Councilman Ben-Yishay to close the Public Hearing on Ordinance #480-2026.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RIVER VALE, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, AMENDING CHAPTER 225 OF THE CODE ENTITLED "TREE REMOVAL"

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Council of the Township of River Vale, that Chapter 225 of the Township Code is hereby amended as follows:

Chapter 225 Tree Removal **& Maintenance (ADD)**

§ 225-2 **Definitions.**

STREET TREE (ADD)

A tree growing within the public right-of-way. In the Township of River Vale, property owners are responsible for the maintenance, including removal, of all trees within the public right-of-way adjacent to their property.

§ 225-4 **Permit required.**

B. (1)

A tree removal permit shall be required prior to the cutting for removal of more than one tree on a tax lot within any twenty-four-month period. Any tree removal ~~conducted in conjunction with the issuance of a soil moving permit or building permit~~ shall require the replacement of two trees for every tree removed regardless of the number removed. All tree replacement shall be in accordance with § **225-5D**. Donations to the Shade Tree Fund may be approved when the required replacement is not feasible.

C.

All tree removals on public lands, including the public right-of-way, shall be reviewed by the Enforcement Officer prior to cutting. At the discretion of the Enforcement Officer, the tree replacements as prescribed in § **225-5D** shall be provided. Property owners are responsible for the maintenance, including removal, of all street trees within the public right-of-way adjacent to their property.

ADD New Section

§ 225-12 Permit required for certain activities**.**

No person, except Township employees acting under instruction from the Enforcement Officer, shall do or cause to be done any of the following acts within the Township of River Vale street rights-of-way and/or easement without a written permit issued by the Enforcement Officer:

A. Cut or trim any limb six inches or more in diameter, break, climb with spikes, disturb the roots of or otherwise injure or spray with any chemical or remove any living tree or shrub or injure, misuse or remove any structure or device placed to support or protect such tree or shrub.

B. Plant any tree or shrub.

C. Fasten any rope, wire, electrical attachment, sign or other artificial device to a tree or shrub, except support ropes or wire.

D. Close or obstruct any open space provided about the base of a tree or shrub which will prevent access of air, water or fertilizer to the roots of such tree or shrub.

E. Pile any building material or dispose of any mortar or cement within six feet of a tree or shrub canopy.

F. Allow any herbicidal gaseous, liquid or solid substance to make contact with the stem or roots of any trees or shrub within the Township right-of-way.

G. Top any tree, "topping" being defined as the severe cutting back on limbs to stubs larger than three inches in diameter within the tree's crown to such a degree so as to remove the canopy and/or disfigure the tree. Trees severely damaged by storms or other causes or certain trees under utility wires or other obstructions where normal pruning practices are impractical may be exempted from this chapter at the discretion of the Enforcement Officer.

This Ordinance shall take effect following adoption and approval in a time and manner prescribed by law.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, Council Vice President Sieg and Council President Criscuolo voted yes. Councilman Ziccarelli abstained.

2nd Hearing of the Public

Motion by Councilman Tolomeo second by Councilwoman Sieg to open the meeting to the public.
All in Favor: Aye

Council President Criscuolo invited the Fire Department to present.

John Tobin, Ex-Chief of the River Vale Fire Department stated that he would like to speak about the proposal submitted to Gennaro for the replacement of the ladder truck. He explained that the current vehicle is 31 years old and by time it is replaced it will be 34 plus years of service. The ladder truck is a vital piece of equipment and helps the department with their ISO rating, particularly with all the construction in town. Chief Tobin has all the information on the truck and is here to answer any questions they may have.

Council President Criscuolo asked if they have any additional information other than what has already been provided. Chief Tobin responded that all the information has been provided. Councilwoman Sieg requested a private meeting to discuss truck and the equipment needed. Chief Tobin agreed and he's available at anytime to meet and break it down to the basics.

Chief Tobin continued that they would like to move forward as quickly as possible as keeping the older pieces of equipment on the road is getting more costly. He added that Bill Peters has been on all of their committees and the current ladder truck was his first one in 1995. He also noted that Bill Peters is a nationally recognized authority for this type of equipment.

Mr. Rotella added they also need to know any additional equipment that is required for the new apparatus.

Mayor Bromberg requested a brief report on the different types of trucks and why they chose this particular one.

Chief Tobin further explained that the mid-mount truck they are looking at will fit in the garage. Also, as far as purchasing there are a couple of options the company offers if you do certain pre-payments and if you plan properly there are discounts as well. He added that Pierce has come up with a program called Stock Apparatus and if you're within the parameters there can be substantial discounts on the pricing. They have found that if they stick to the stock program the price will come in less than the previously discussed tiller truck. He explained that Pierce is trying to move customers from the custom trucks to the stock trucks by offering major discounts. This also allows them to mass produce the trucks. Chief Tobin added that Pierce is increasing their pricing on November 1st.

Bill Peters added Pierce is holding a spot for them and if they take advantage of the stock program they can get the truck in 24 months. At this time the truck can still be ordered under the stock program until November 1st.

Councilman Tolomeo was very encouraged by this discussion and the progress made.

There being no further questions or comments. Motion by Councilman Ben-Yishay second by Councilwoman Sieg to close the meeting to the public.
All in Favor: Aye

RESOLUTION

Motion by Councilman Tolomeo second by Councilman Ben-Yishay to approve Resolutions #2026-185 as follows:

Resolution #2026-185

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNCIL TO ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and appropriate for the Township Council to discuss certain matters in a meeting not open to the public, the nature of which items are denoted below.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of River Vale is hereby authorized to enter into Closed Session for the following reason(s) as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12:

> Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise their ethical duties as a lawyer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the discussion conducted in this session be disclosed at such time as the need for confidentially is no longer needed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no formal action will be taken following the Closed Session.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilman Tolomeo, Councilman Ben-Yishay, Council Vice President Sieg and Council President Criscuolo voted yes. Councilman Ziccarelli abstained.

Motion by Councilwoman Sieg second by Councilman Tolomeo to adjourn from Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Sieg second by Councilman Ben-Yishay to adjourn the meeting 10:00pm. All in Favor: Aye

Council President Criscuolo

ATTEST: *Karen Campanelli, Township Clerk*