

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 1, 2024
MAYOR AND BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING NO. 4**

A special meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of South River, in the County of Middlesex and the State of New Jersey was held on February 1, 2024 and was called to order by Mayor Guindi at 7:00 PM with the following Council Members in Attendance:

Mayor and Council Roll Call	Present	Absent	Excused Tardy
<i>Mayor Peter S. Guindi</i>	X		
<i>Council President Jason Oliveira</i>	X		
<i>Councilwoman Donna Balazs</i>	X		
<i>Councilman Anthony Ciulla</i>	X		
<i>Councilman Hank Dziemian</i>	X		
<i>Councilman James Gurchensky</i>	X		
<i>Councilman John Krenzel</i>		X	

Also attending this meeting were Business Administrator Arthur Londensky, Chief Financial Officer Joseph Zanga, Borough Attorney Matthew Donahue, and Borough Engineer Bruce Koch

IN COMPLIANCE WITH CHAPTER 231 OF PUBLIC LAW OF 1975, NOTICE OF THIS SPECIAL MEETING WAS GIVEN BY WAY OF A SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE FILED WITH THE BOROUGH CLERK, THE HOME NEWS TRIBUNE ON JANUARY 15, 2024 AND POSTED TO THE BOROUGH WEBSITE, THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE BUILDING AT 61 MAIN STREET, SOUTH RIVER AND POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE BOROUGH OF SOUTH RIVER MUNICIPAL BUILDING.

PRESENTATION –GREKOSKI PARK COMPLETELY INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND GREEN ACRES PROGRAM, JAKE’S LAW PLAYGROUND GRANT APPLICATION

At this time, Council President Oliveira would like the governing body and the public to follow along to the presentation with the provided slide show print outs. Council President Oliveira starts off with speaking on the process of applying for the grant and on Jake’s Law in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Council President speaks on the location for this grant in South River and with the Borough Engineer Survey, it was decided on Grekoski Park. Council President introduces the Concept Plan for the park and speaks on the many inclusive playground equipment that will be provided for individuals with disabilities, along with any South River resident who wishes to utilize the park. There is then much discussion regarding the impact analysis. Council President Oliveira speaks on working with South Rivers Shade Tree Commission and the Borough Engineer with the potential impact to trees in the area. There has been an application put in place to take one of the trees down, but there will be multiple trees planted around the park. There is no sea level rise impact and there will be short term limited use of the park during construction. Council President Oliveira speaks on the Mitigation Measures for this project and states there is a limited disturbance in the freshwater and riparian zones. There is discussion on whether the park will be locked, and the answer is no. Council President states there will be a fence around the perimeter of the playground but there will be no locking the facility. Council President Oliveira speaks on the excitement he has for this inclusive project and how much it will benefit all residents of South River. This grant will take up 75% of the total cost and there will be another grant that will be applied to help pay the remaining 25% of the cost.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Guindi opened the floor for Public Comment.

Dori Ann Kerber, Milltown, Ms. Kerber speaks on this park being put in place in Milltown as well, and how beneficial it will be for children with disabilities. Ms. Kerber states this is a wonderful idea and a lot of other towns already

have or are working on getting an inclusive park for individuals with disabilities and thanks everyone for being proactive.

Shari Garretson, 153 Kamm Avenue, Ms. Garretson also states this is a wonderful idea for South River. Ms. Garretson would like to know the number of children in South River have a disability and Ms. Dawn McDonald states there is a study that has been linked to show there are 1,812 people with disabilities and 157 of them are under 18 years old. Ms. Garretson wants to make sure it is accessible for children and individuals that do not have a disability and Council President Oliveira states the park can utilized by anyone. Ms. Garretson speaks on the ADA surface and wonders if it will have to be replaced after several years. Council President Oliveira states this surface is wheelchair friendly, there will be sidewalks installed, and handicapped spaces provided as well. The surface is something that will benefit the South River long term. Ms. McDonald also speaks on the quiet zone for children on the autism spectrum and the gazebo for shading and quiet time. There is a requirement that the inclusive playground have at least 20% shading. Ms. Garretson thanks everyone for their hard work.

Salvatore Cuiccio, 104 OBT, Mr. Cuiccio states this is a benefit for South River and thanks everyone for their work on getting this project off the ground.

Being that no one else came forward for public comment, Mayor Guindi requested motion to close. Councilman Ciulla motioned to close; seconded by Councilwoman Balazs. All in Favor.

CONSENT RESOLUTIONS 2024-83 TO 2024-84

WHEREAS RESOLUTION 2024-01 AUTHORIZES THE BOROUGH COUNCIL TO UTILIZE A CONSENT AGENDA TO ADOPT VARIOUS RESOLUTIONS OF A ROUTINE AND NONCONTROVERSIAL NATURE AT ONE TIME. NOW THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT THE BELOW LISTED RESOLUTIONS ARE HEREBY ADOPTED BY THE BOROUGH COUNCIL IN WHOLE AS IF THE SAME WERE INDIVIDUALLY ACTED UPON.

The Borough Clerk read the resolution titles on the consent agenda.

RESOLUTION 2024-83

BOROUGH OF SOUTH RIVER COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY FOR FILING WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GREEN ACRES PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the regulations of the Green Acres Program require the submission of a Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) which enlists all property owned and/or leased by the Local Unit for recreational and open space purposes; and

WHEREAS, the regulations of the Green Acres Program allow amendments to the ROSI; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of South River last amended their ROSI in 1989 and at this time is in need of an amendment; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of South River has reviewed the attached Recreation and Open Space Inventory prepared by its staff.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of South River that the Recreation and Open Space Inventory is hereby approved, accepted, and adopted.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Planning Board Chairperson are hereby authorized to sign the ROSI for submission to Green Acres and that a certified copy of this resolution and the ROSI be forwarded to the State of New Jersey Office of Green Acres.

COUNCIL	MOTION		2ND	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
<i>Councilwoman Balazs</i>	X		X				
<i>Councilman Ciulla</i>			X				
<i>Councilman Dziemian</i>			X				
<i>Councilman Gurchensky</i>			X				
<i>Councilman Krenzel</i>							X
<i>Council President Oliveira</i>		X	X				

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of authorization to approve the foregoing resolution adopted by the Mayor and Borough Council of South River on February 1, 2024

Alyssa Hager, RMC
Municipal Clerk
Borough of South River

RESOLUTION 2024-84

RESOLUTION APPROVING SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE NJDEP GREEN ACRES PROGRAM FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COMPLETELY INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND AT GREKOSKI PARK

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program ("State"), provides grants and/or loans to municipal and county governments and grants to nonprofit organizations for assistance in the acquisition, development, and stewardship of lands for outdoor recreation and conservation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of South River desires to further the public interest by obtaining funding in the amount of \$494,250.00, in the form of a \$494,250.00 matching grant and, if available, a \$0 loan, from the State to fund the following project(s): Completely Inclusive Playground at Grekoski Park, at a cost of \$659,000.00;

WHEREAS, the State shall determine if the application is complete and in conformance with the scope and intent of the Green Acres Program, and notify the applicant of the amount of the funding award; and

WHEREAS, the applicant is willing to use the State's funds in accordance with such rules, regulations, and applicable statutes, and is willing to enter into an agreement with the State for the above-named project;

NOW, THEREFORE, the governing body/board resolves that:

1. Mayor Guindi or the successor to the office of the Borough of South River is hereby authorized to:
 - a. make application for such a loan and/or such a grant,
 - b. provide additional application information and furnish such documents as may be required, and
 - c. act as the authorized correspondent of the above-named applicant;
2. The applicant agrees to provide its matching share to the Green Acres funding request, if a match is required, in the amount of \$164,750.00;
3. In the event the State's funds are less than the total project cost specified above, the applicant has the balance of funding necessary to complete the project;
4. The applicant agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations in its performance of the project; and

5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

COUNCIL	MOTION	2ND	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
<i>Councilwoman Balazs</i>	X		X			
<i>Councilman Ciulla</i>			X			
<i>Councilman Dziemian</i>			X			
<i>Councilman Gurchensky</i>			X			
<i>Councilman Krenzel</i>						X
<i>Council President Oliveira</i>		X	X			

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of authorization to approve the foregoing resolution adopted by the Mayor and Borough Council of South River on February 1, 2024

Alyssa Hager, RMC
Municipal Clerk
Borough of South River

GOVERNING BODY COMMENTS (For the Good and Welfare of the Borough)

Councilman Ciulla

- Thanks everyone for their hard work on applying for this grant and is looking forward to the success of the inclusive park in South River.

Councilwoman Balazs

- Thank you to everyone for the work put in to applying for this grant. It will be beneficial for South River and its residents.

Councilman Gurchensky

- Thanks Council President Oliveira for the presentation and states it will bring so much more compassion to South River and its residents of all disabilities.

Councilman Dziemian

- This inclusive park will be great for South River and all the residents of the town.

Council President Oliveira

- Very passionate about this project and very excited for what is come for South River and the inclusive playground.
- Thank you so much Dawn for all your hard work on getting this grant process off the ground.
- Thank you, Mayor Guindi, for having this special meeting.
- There will be partnership with the Shade Tree Commission to help with this project.

Mayor Guindi

- Thank you to everyone who helped with the grant process. The presentation was excellent and is very excited for more grants to come.
- This park will be great for South River and its residents.

ADJOURNMENT

Being there was no further business, Mayor Guindi called for motion to adjourn. Council President Oliveira moved to adjourn; seconded by Councilman Dziemian. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Hager

Alyssa Hager, RMC
Borough Clerk