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Borough of Rutherford NJ

## From the desk of Mayor Frank Nunziato

2020 has been quite a year and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the residents, volunteers and Borough employees that help make Rutherford a wonderful place to live, as this will be our final newsletter of the year. Successfully running a town is challenging under the best circumstances. But this year obviously posed a completely new set of challenges that required all of us to think outside of the box and work as a team. Beginning March 12th, our employees pivoted from their typical workday routines and adjusted to new schedules and tasks seamlessly. I'd like to thank Borough Administrator Bob Kakoleski and Police Chief John Russo for their calm and effective leadership throughout the year as well as Director of the Health Department Brian O'Keefe, who has risen to every unique challenge given to him.

I don't think any of us can express enough gratitude for the members of our volunteer ambulance corps and fire department. These volunteers routinely respond potentially hazardous situations in order to help their community. These organizations are always in need of new members and donations. If you are in the position to do so, consider giving what you can.

2020 wasn't exactly what I thought my first year as Mayor would look like, but with the help of my Council colleagues, Borough employees and committee volunteers, I believe 2021 will bring better times. After the new year I will share with you the initiatives I'm excited to be a part of that will keep Rutherford moving forward while preserving the community we all know and love.

Have a safe and healthy holiday season and please enjoy them responsibly.

Sincerely,  
Mayor Frank Nunziato

### HEALTH

The Rutherford Health Department is pleased to report that they still have additional doses of the seasonal influenza vaccine and are opening the program to all residents three years (3) of age and older, free of charge. Most of the time seasonal flu activity peaks in January, February or later. It is not too late to receive the influenza vaccine and reduce your chances of getting the flu. Those interested in receiving the vaccine can contact the public health nurses weekdays between 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM at 201-460-3020 for additional information.

### REC

**Letters to Santa:** Recreation department assisted Santa by sending out nearly 700 letters!

All residents who wanted to receive a letter, completed a google form with their child's information. Then, one of our amazing volunteers, Tracy Leigh was able to create decorative labels. Then in true elf form we stuffed, and labeled the envelopes & sent the letters.

**Gingerbread Contest:** Our residents were encouraged to create a gingerbread art, and they did not disappoint! We had over 56 submissions of premade structures, and homemade gingerbread houses!

**House & Storefront Decorating Contests!** We have a panel of anonymous judges who will visit all 62 registered homes. We have postponed the winners announcement to Wednesday 12/23, due to the snowstorm. An easy to use map of all the entered decorated homes was developed, so everyone can join in the fun! The interactive map has even been shared with neighboring towns to participate in our Holiday decorating!

**Thank you BCB Bank for your sponsorship of prizes!**

**Winter Wonderland in Lincoln Park:** This year we couldn't host the fun Santa's village at Lincoln Park, due to gathering restrictions. We reached out to all civic groups, schools, houses of worship and Felician University to create a charming display in Lincoln Park. We have 21 Snowman displays thru out the park, where residents can walk thru and snap pictures at the delightful displays.

**Snow day Snowmen:** We had 24 submissions of families & neighbors enjoying the snowstorm. We received their entries online, and posted the excitement & imagination on our social media platforms.

## Council President Tom Mullahey

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I'd like to thank my Council colleagues who supported the Williams Center redevelopment plan which was referred to the Planning Board for review and comment. The plan is a vision put together by a group of dedicated residents who volunteered their time throughout the past year. I'd also like to thank all those residents who came out to our town hall meetings and who offered their ideas and shared their experiences, which is all reflected in the redevelopment plan.

## Councilman Mark Goldsack

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### PLANNING BOARD:

#### **Resolution 178-2020 - A resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Rutherford, County of Bergen, New Jersey, Authorizing and Directing the Rutherford Planning Board to Conduct a Preliminary Investigation to Determine Whether Various Properties Constitute an Area In Need of Redevelopment- Held -**

After seeing the success of the Parker, additional property owners along that stretch of Park Avenue approached the Borough interested in exploring their options as it pertained to zoning changes afforded by an "area in need of redevelopment" designation. These requests, in conjunction with an application pending before the Planning Board regarding a project on Chestnut Street, prompted the Borough to draft this resolution directing the Planning Board to conduct a study of the area. The study, and possible designation, would allow the Borough to formulate a comprehensive plan for the area, instead of allowing piecemeal development. Additionally, following advice from our Planner, the Borough included the Library in the study area, not for the purpose of selling or redeveloping it, but to include a plan for enhancement of the Library's public space in the larger plan for the area. There was miscommunication about whether or not this should have been included in the final resolution. I decided to hold the resolution after concerns were shared with me by both my colleagues and the public about the inclusion of the library property and additionally about the timing of the resolution.

### FINANCE:

**Resolution 198-2020 – Resolution awarding the employee prescription drug program to Benecard services, LLC effective January 1, 2021 - Passed** -The previous provider of prescription benefits for Borough employees exited the market. As a result, the Borough sought out and secured the new provider for its prescription benefit plan authorized by this resolution. Cost savings for the borough as the contract will be 15% less in 2021 than 2020

#### **Authorization for Neglia Engineering to provide construction management services for the 2020-2021 road improvements project in the amount of \$29,750 - Passed**

Streets slated for paving include Grand, Darwin, Donaldson and Vreeland Avenues. The 2020-2021 road improvements program is being funded by a combination of grants from the New Jersey Department of Transportation and Community Development Block Grant Program and Borough capital funds.

**Resolution 199-2020 – Resolution authorizing a Chapter 159 budget insertion for a Bulletproof vest partnership grant in the amount of \$2,178 - Passed** - New Jersey law allows for the addition of a special item of revenue to an already adopted municipal budget, if that revenue is made available to the Borough via public or private funding. Here, the Borough is adding a \$2,178 grant that was not anticipated as revenue at the time the 2020 budget was adopted.

#### **Resolution 202-2020 – Authorization of a budget**

**transfer of funds - Passed** - NJ Law provides for transfers from appropriations with an excess over and above the amount necessary to fulfill the purpose for those specific appropriations to those appropriations deemed to be insufficient. This is routine business that usually happens at the end of every calendar year.

#### **Resolution 203 – 2020 – Authorization to cancel outstanding checks in the amount of \$5,022.23 - Passed**

- Here, again, is routine, year-end business.

#### **Resolution 204-2020 – Award of contract to Kimberly Bogosian / Bogosian Design LLC for website administration in an amount not to exceed \$27,000 - Passed**

- We look forward to our continued work with Kim as we strive to constantly improve the various ways the Mayor and Council communicate with our community. She has greatly enhanced the Borough's social media presence allowing us to disseminate information in a more efficient and expeditious manner.

## Councilwoman Maria Begg-Roberson

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I would like to use this opportunity to thank all our hard working borough employees and members of the boards and committees that I serve as the liaison to.

I would like to thank Frank Recanati of the Buildings and Grounds Department. His team worked diligently during the height of the pandemic to support the borough despite being short staffed. His team members are: Barbara Elzahy, Natalie Gagliardo, Laurie Gentile, Keith Matino, Anthony Hackett, Nick Lordo JR., Chris Venezia, Garrett Pepe, Robert Connell, Rob Van Winkle, Billy Finn, and Joe Russo.

I would also like to thank the Board of Adjustment who serve the borough upholding Rutherford's zoning ordinances in all the decisions that they make. Thank you to Board Chairman Richard Rovito, James Dowden, Hajka Kucevic, Andrew Michalski, Greg Tardiff, Phil Townsend, Robby Kenney, Mike Kucevic, Connor Fox, and Rose Inguanti.

Thank you to the hardworking Green Team who strive to ensure that Rutherford is a safe place to live environmentally. Thank you to Julia Siegel, Eileen Eastham, Karen Travellin, Greg Recine, Cynthia Chovan, Brian Hanson-Harding, Lia Abrams, Alethia Gomez, and Brianna Nema

Thank you to Genevieve Kacmarcik, Director of Social Services, for her dedication to residents in need.

I look forward to a new year with new hopes, challenges, and well-deserved victories.

"Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, 'it will be happier.'" Alfred Lord Tennyson