

Borough of Palisades Park
Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council
May 9, 2022

Mayor Christopher Chung opened the meeting.

Statement: This is a Special Meeting of the Mayor & Council, and notice was given as follows:

1. Notice was filed May 4, 2022 with The Record & Newark Star Ledger, both official newspapers of the Borough.
2. Notice was posted on the Bulletin Board.
3. Copy is preserved in the Clerk's Office.

Pledge of Allegiance Led By Councilperson: **MICHAEL VIETRI**

Moment of Silence for Our Troops

ROLL CALL:

Councilperson	Jang	Present
"	Kim	Absent
"	Min	Absent
"	Park	Present
"	Pirrera	Present
"	Vietri	Present

Motion Made By Councilperson: Pirrera

Seconded by Councilperson: Jang

To Excuse Councilman Kim and Councilman Min from the Special Meeting

All Present in Favor by Voice Vote.

Borough Attorney John Schettino, Esq. Present

Borough Administrator David Lorenzo Absent

The Borough Attorney, John Schettino, suggested that the public should be heard before the Mayor and Council took any action.

The Mayor stated that he had called the Special Meeting to discuss the Officer-in-Charge position. As previously discussed and agreed upon, until the final decision was made to make a Police Chief, the two Captains would rotate. The Mayor made a recommendation to rotate back to Captain Anthony Espino as OIC effective May 10, 2022.

Councilwoman Jang stated that the Mayor and Council should discuss the Police Director position. The Mayor answered that this was not a part of the agenda, and today was about switching the OIC positions. Councilwoman Jang said that one Officer-in-Charge may not be enough to carry all the police matters. As a Councilwoman, she was thinking about getting extra help. Mr. Schettino stated that before the Council makes a final decision, it should be decided if they wanted a Police Director or not. The Mayor stated that this could be discussed at the May meeting. Mr. Schettino advised the Mayor and Council that they could discuss the position of the Police Director in Closed Session, and if any specific individuals were going to be discussed, Mr. Schettino would have to provide those individuals with RICE notices.

Councilman Vietri stated that the three consultants were fired and now Councilwoman Jang wanted to hire one police director. The three consultants had over 100 years of combined experience. Councilwoman Jang stated that it would be helpful to have a Police Director or someone who would work with the Officer-in-Charge.

Motion Made By Councilperson: Pirrera

Seconded By Councilperson: Jang

To Open Meeting to Public

All Present in Favor by Voice Vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Susan Brauer (50 Henry Ave) – Asked how long Captain Espino had been on the force. Councilman Vietri stated 23 years. Ms. Brauer said that 20 years was a lot of good experience, and he would have not been made Captain if he was not good at what he did. She addressed Councilwoman Jang and said she had only been on the Council for 5 months and maybe she needed a little more time to immerse herself before suggesting a PD Director.

Marsha Schor (50 Henry Ave) – Asked Ms. Jang that when she was running or on the Board, no questions were ever brought up about the other Officer-in-Charge. Now that the town decided to put someone new, Ms. Jang had all these questions. Ms. Schor asked Ms. Jang why she had not said anything before. Ms.

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Jang responded that she had said things about this in March and again in April. She said there needed to be someone strong in charge for the Police Department.

Gerry White – Asked if the Mayor and Council was again appointing someone as the Officer-in-Charge and not a Chief for an indefinite period of time. The Mayor answered that was correct.

Neris Papoters – Said that there were three police consultants, but the situation with the police department got worse so she thought there needed to be different change.

Motion Made By Councilperson: Pirrera
Seconded By Councilperson: Jang

To Close Public Portion

All Present in Favor by Voice Vote.

Mayor Chung asked for a motion to rotate Captain Espino as the Officer-in-Charge effective May 10, 2022. Councilwoman Jang asked for the term. The Mayor answered indefinitely. Councilman Vietri asked what the reason for the change was. The Mayor answered that everyone agreed in the beginning that the Officers-in-Charge would be on a rotational basis. He said it was good time to make the change. He said Captain Lee was in charge for almost a year. Councilman Vietri said that when Capt. Lee was in charge, he started the Honor Guard, brought the PD up and forward, and started the process for getting new guns.

OFF CONSENT:

RESOLUTION 2022-143 Appointment of Officer-In-Charge of the Palisades Park Police Department
(RE: A. Espino)

OFF CONSENT AGENDA:

RESOLUTION 2022-143: Appointment of Officer-In-Charge of the Palisades Park Police Department (RE: A. Espino):

WHEREAS, the Palisades Park Police Department is operating without a Police Chief; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body has determined that an Officer In Charge should be appointed on a rotating basis until such time as a permanent appointment is made to head the Police Department; and

WHEREAS, Captain Anthony Espino initially served as Officer In Charge followed by Captain Shawn Lee; and

WHEREAS, the position of Officer In Charge should now rotate back to Captain Anthony Espino; and

WHEREAS, Captain Espino meets all the qualifications necessary to be appointed Officer-In-Charge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Palisades Park, County of Bergen and State of New Jersey, that Captain Anthony Espino be and is hereby appointed Officer-In-Charge of the Palisades Park Police Department effective May 10, 2022; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Borough Administrator be and he is hereby authorized and directed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to Captain Anthony Espino and the Palisades Park Police Department immediately upon its passage and to place a copy of said resolution in his personnel file.

Motion Made By Councilperson: Park
Seconded By Councilperson: Jang

To Adopt Resolution #2022-143

ROLL CALL:

Councilperson	Jang	Yes
“	Kim	Absent
“	Min	Absent
“	Park	Yes
“	Pirrera	Recused
“	Vietri	Recused

The Borough Attorney stated that the two votes of “yes” were the majority because of the recusals. This

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type of vote only required the majority of those eligible to vote.

COUNCIL REPORTS: None

Motion Made By Councilperson: Pirrera

Seconded By Councilperson: Jang

To Adjourn the Special Meeting

All Present in Favor by Voice Vote.

Meeting adjourned.

Attest:



Gina S. Kim, RMC, CMC
Borough Clerk