



UNION COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2018
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bruce Bergen presided and called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed Chairman Sergio Granados, Vice Chairman Bette Jane Kowalski, Freeholder Bruce H. Bergen, Freeholder Linda Carter, Freeholder Angel G. Estrada, Freeholder Angela R. Garretson, Freeholder Christopher Hudak, Freeholder Mohamed S. Jalloh, and Freeholder Alexander Mirabella were in attendance.

Also present were County Manager Edward Oatman, County Counsel Robert E. Barry, Esq. and Clerk of the Board James Pelletiere.

PRAYER AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Prayer and Salute to the Flag were led by the Clerk of the Board.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

The statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act was read by the Clerk of the Board.

PRESENTATION FROM THE BOARD

A resolution presentation will be made by Chairman Sergio Granados and Freeholder Alexander Mirabella to Joseph O'Neill, President of Benner's Auto Body; US Navy Petty Officer Josue Jaramillo; US Navy Operation Specialist 2nd Class Jorge Vasquez; NJ Veterans Network; and Union High School JROTC in recognition of their service to military veterans as the Board celebrates the month of May, 2018 as Military Appreciation Month throughout Union County.

Chairman Granados called upon Freeholder Mirabella to join him for the evening's first presentation.

Freeholder Mirabella stated that the Board was proud to have several military veterans and service providers to honor in recognition of May as "Military Appreciation Month" in Union County. He invited the honorees up to join both he and Chairman Granados.

Freeholder Mirabella invited Mike Boll to introduce the NJ Veterans Network. Mr. Boll made comments relative to the NJ Veterans Network's efforts in raising over \$25,000 for "Project 21" which provided disaster relief for Puerto Rico. He advised how the Union High School ROTC was able to assist in raising approximately 47,000 among the Union Township business community.

Chairman Granados made comments relative to Military Appreciation Month and congratulated each of the honorees for their service to their country, and for assisting those that have served in the military.

Freeholder Mirabella made comments relative to a recent medal presentation made to Union County veterans, and thanked Janna Williams for her efforts with the Union County Office on Veterans. He recognized Undersheriff (and veteran) "Micky" Colon for his service.

Chairman Granados applauded Joe O'niell, of Benner's Auto Body, for his work in donating cars to veterans.

A resolution presentation will be made by Chairman Sergio Granados and Freeholder Angel G. Estrada recognizing and commending Elizabeth Councilman Frank Cuesta for his efforts with the Elizabeth's Promise Awards Inc.

Chairman Granados called upon Freeholder Estrada to join him for the evening's second presentation. Chairman Granados stated that this was the twelfth year of the "Elizabeth Promise Awards" and noted that this year alone, he awarded 58 scholarships, totaling \$90,000, to help students from his community to attend college. He added that many of the students who receive the scholarship continue to follow in Councilman Cuesta's footsteps by giving back to the community.

Freeholder Estrada stated that Councilman Cuesta has been serving his community as Councilwoman for eighteen years. He commented on his service as a teacher, principal and assistant superintendent, and spoke to his commitment to the young people within the community.

Councilman Cuesta thanked the Board for the honor, stating that he accepted the award on behalf of the Elizabeth Promise Awards Committee. He stated the Committee has raised and awarded over \$500,000 in scholarships over the past twelve years. He added that he is proud of all of the recipients, as the Chairman noted, for their recognizing the importance in giving back to their community as they continue with their scholastic and professional careers.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNICATIONS

Note and File

Oath of Office: Mental Health Advisory Board: Joseph Ume; Union County Advisory Board on the Status of Minorities; Union County College Board of Trustees: Nicholas Fixmer; Union County Transportation Advisory Board: Robert W. Messler; Union County Homeless Trust Fund Advisory Board: Cory Storch, Brandon Givens and Stelio Papadopoulo; Voter Accessibility Advisory Committee: Sergio Granados.

Chairman Granados called for a motion to approve the Communications. On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Hudak, roll call showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative.

2018 COLA / CAP BANK RESOLUTION ADOPTION

PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION

The meeting is open to the public for the purpose of commenting on the COLA/CAP Bank Resolution only.

Bruce Paterson, of Garwood, made comments relative to the Cap Bank, the County's running fund balance and the County's surplus. He stated that he didn't think the Board needs to vote in favor of the Cap Bank resolution due to the county's "sufficient" surplus. He asked how much is in the Cap Bank.

Director Taylor advised that the Cap Bank is not an appropriation of funds, rather a financial management tool to utilize in the event additional appropriations are needed. She advised that the levy does not include using any of the Cap Bank allowed under this Cap Bank resolution (equal to 1% or \$2.5 million). She added that these funds lapse and can be utilized in the next two years. She also noted that the County did not use any of last year's Cap Bank approval in this year's budget. She also advised that the County is subject to the more restrictive 2010 Cap.

2018-443 FREEHOLDER BRUCE H. BERGEN: Resolution to exceed the County tax levy limit and to establish a CAP Bank (N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.14)

Freeholder Bergen made comments in support of the Cap Bank resolution, stating his countering opinion from (the speaker) that it would be irresponsible of the County not to adopt the financial tool aimed at safeguarding the County from unexpected budgetary issues.

On a motion made by Freeholder Bergen and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018 UNION COUNTY BUDGET TITLE RESOLUTION

PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION

The meeting is open to the public for the purpose of commenting on the Budget "Read by Title" resolution only

Chairman Granados advised that this resolution would allow the County to adopt the budget by title, rather than reading into the record each line-item of the budget. He noted that the County has met the statutory requirement relative to its publication and making the budget available to the public for review in order to adopt the budget by title.

Bruce Paterson, of Garwood, inquired if there will be any amendments that will have to be read aloud.

Clerk of the Board Pelletiere interjected that the State has advised the County that there were no amendments necessary to the budget and can be adopted as introduced, and therefore there will not be a need to read into the record any amendments for adoption of the budget.

- 2018-444 FREEHOLDER BRUCE H. BERGEN:** Resolution determining that the 2018 Union County Budget shall be read by title and declaring that the public hearing conditions set forth pursuant to N.J.S.A.:40A: 4-8(1a)(1b) have been satisfied.

On a motion made by Freeholder Hudak and seconded by Freeholder Carter, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018 UNION COUNTY BUDGET RESOLUTION ADOPTION

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2018 UNION COUNTY BUDGET

The meeting is open to the public for the purpose of commenting on the 2018 Union County Budget resolution only.

Chairman Granados commended Fiscal Subcommittee Chairman Bergen leading the efforts with the 2018 budget. He thanked Fiscal Subcommittee members Vice Chairman Kowalski, Freeholder Mirabella and Freeholder Estrada for ensuring the lowest tax increase in sixteen years. He thanked the entire Board for making the provision of services to the County's residents a priority, while being fiscally responsible. He commended the team effort of the entire Board in drafting a budget the County can be proud of.

Fiscal Chairman Bergen made the following statement:

Following our review of the 2018 budget over the past several months, we are now set to adopt it tonight.

Since the former County Manager presented his executive budget in February, the Freeholder's Fiscal Committee, the County's Fiscal Efficiency Ad Hoc Committee which was an initiative of Chairman Granados, and all Department heads worked together to reduce the tax levy by an additional \$2.489 million. This was done without any loss of jobs, reduction of services or negative impact on our stellar bond rating.

The overall result is a tax increase of just 1.75 percent. This is the lowest overall tax increase in 16 years. As always, the final budget complies with both the 1977 CAP and the 2010 CAP; the latter of which is more restrictive.

Overall, the County's fiscal position has continued to improve. We not only now enjoy the highest bond rating available, but our revenue position continues to improve.

As per the Former-County Manager's report presented with the executive budget, the rising tide of economic success has dramatically witnessed a major increase in our ratable base. This year it increased by 3.26 percent or \$2.2 billion in new

valuation over 2017. This is the largest amount in 10 years and our fourth annual increase in a row (in our ratable base).

The strong real estate market has also resulted in the highest growth in 12 years from fees realized through the County Clerk's Office, which totaled \$44.29 million.

In continuing our top bond rating, Moody's cited, among other things, the County's management of its debt. The County's net debt expressed as a percentage of the equalized valuation basis is .876 of equalized value—another reduction year over year---and far less than the maximum of 2 percent permitted by the state.

Once again, I would like to thank the members of the Fiscal Committee---Freeholder Vice Chairman Kowalski, and Freeholders Estrada and Mirabella, for their work, along with our County Manager, our Department heads and our Finance Director Bibi Taylor and her staff, as well as Deputy Comptroller Mel Zito.

Chairman Granados, I thank you for your time.

Bruce Paterson, of Garwood, made comments relative to the size of the County budget and lack of comments by the public. He made comments relative to the surplus, stating that the growing surplus (\$67 million) is "out of control". He thanked the Board for the low tax increase, but noted the Board should be using the high surplus to allow for a zero percent tax increase. He inquired what the maximum surplus percentage is allowable by law. He asked for an explanation as to why the County is receiving a reduction of \$1 million in revenue from the Union County Improvement Authority. He made various suggestions, inclusive that matching grants should be replaced with non-matching grants. He questioned how much debt is on the books for the County.

Director Taylor advised that the debt service for this year is \$67,800,000.

2018-445 FREEHOLDER BRUCE H. BERGEN: Resolution Adopting the 2018 County of Union Budget.

On a motion made by Freeholder Carter and seconded by Freeholder Hudak, roll call showed seven members voting in the affirmative, with Freeholder Estrada and Freeholder Jalloh voting in the negative.

PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION

The meeting is open to the public for the purpose of commenting on Resolutions being offered for adoption only.

There were no public comments.

RESOLUTIONS

The following Resolutions are being offered for adoption:

2018-446 FREEHOLDER ANGEL G. ESTRADA: Appointing the following members to the Emergency Management Council for a term ending December 31, 2018: Ed Oatman (County Manager), Andrew Moran (Public Safety Director), Christopher Scaturro (OEM Coordinator), Chris Debbie (County Police Chief), William Kane (Deputy OEM Coordinator), Frederic Fretz (Fire Coordinator), Gareth Williams (EMS Coordinator), Thomas Mineo (Damage Assessment/County Engineer), Sebastian D'Elia (Public Information Officer), Michael Redding (Elizabethtown Gas), Michael Monahan (Acting Prosecutor), Peter Corvelli (Sheriff), Joseph Graziano, Jr. (DPW Director), Annarely McNair (Health Officer) and Michael McIntyre (Salvation Army).

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-447 FREEHOLDER ANGELA R. GARRETSON: Re-appointing Robert Ehrenbeck to the Union County Transportation Advisory Board as an At-Large member for a term ending December 31, 2018.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-448 FREEHOLDER ALEXANDER MIRABELLA: Authorizing the County Manager to Execute an Amendment to an existing Green Acres Grant for the County Open Space and Recreation Plan to accept an additional \$1,500,000 in funding.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-449 FREEHOLDER ALEXANDER MIRABELLA: Appointing the following members to the Fire Services Advisory Board for a term ending December 31, 2018: Joseph Moschello (Fire Prevention Association), Steven Ruhl (Fire Academy Dean), Gary Steitz (Fire Investigation Representative), Andrew Moran (Public Safety Director), Christopher Scaturro (Emergency Services Director/Chief), William Kane (Emergency Services Deputy), Eric Evers (Chief, Combo Department), Joseph Signorello, (Chief, Volunteer Department , (Thomas McNamara (Largest City Fire Chief), Michael Scanio (2nd Largest City Fire Chief), Dan Czeh (President, Fire Chief Association), Fred Fretz (County Fire Coordinator) and Kristen Von St. Paul (Emergency Services Support Staff).

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-450 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Resolution ratifying permission granted to the City of Linden to hang a banner over Wood Avenue near Curtis Street and Elizabeth Avenue from May 1, 2018 to May 10, 2018 to promote the Police Unity Tour which was held on Wednesday, May 9, 2018.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-451 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Resolution granting permission to the City of Linden to hang banners and/or street closures for the following events: September to Remember – Saturday, September 29, 2018 – closing of Wood Avenue, from Elizabeth Avenue to Gesner Street, from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. with a rain date of Sunday, September 30, 2018. Also, to hang a banner advertising the event on North Wood Avenue between Curtis Street and Gibbons Street and Elizabeth and Wood Avenue from August 20, 2018 through September 30, 2018. Also, granting permission to close Wood Avenue on Friday, October 5, 2018 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for the Annual Fire Prevention and Life Safety Fair.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-452 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Resolution concurring with the Township of Berkeley Heights granting permission to Smith Chiropractic to hang a banner across Springfield Avenue from August 13, 2018 to September 24, 2018 for the Annual Berkeley Heights 5K Run to be held on Sunday, September 16, 2018.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-453 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Resolution granting permission to the City of Linden to a hang banner over Wood Avenue, at Curtis Street and at Elizabeth Avenue from May 19, 2018 to August 19, 2018 to promote the farmers market which will be held on Saturday's beginning May 19, 2018 through October 27, 2018.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-454 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Authorizing the County Manager to approve the 2018 Union County GAP One-Time Spending Plan pursuant to a Request for Proposal (RFP) procurement process in the total amount not to exceed \$370,905 for subcontracted services to be provided during the period of June 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018; further authorizing the transfer of funds among the agencies during the contract period should service needs change and/or if any of the agencies fail to meet contractual obligation.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed eight members voting in the affirmative, with Freeholder Bergen abstaining.

2018-455 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Amending Resolution 2016-590 entering into contract with Urban League of Union County, Elizabeth, NJ, to extend the contract period six (6) months for the period of July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018; all other terms of contract remain the same.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-456 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Amending Resolution 2016-541 entering into contract with Bridgeway Rehabilitation Services, Inc., Elizabeth, NJ, to

reduce the total amount of the contract by \$30,000 for a new total contract amount of \$191,211.38 and to extend the contract period an additional six (6) months for a new contract period of July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2018; all other terms of contract remain the same.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-457 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS:** Authorizing the County Manager to exercise the County's option to extend the contract term of the Shared Services Agreement between the County of Union and the County of Essex Department of Corrections, Newark, NJ for relocation of inmates on an as needed basis for the period of May 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018, at per diem cost of \$98.00 per inmate in an amount not to exceed \$96,040.00.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-458 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS:** Authorizing the County Manager to Execute an Amendment to the Green Acres Grant approved in the amount of \$900,000 to reflect a change in scope to the Oak Ridge Project to include an athletic track and field.

FREEHOLDER SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS

- 2018-459 FREEHOLDER LINDA CARTER:** Resolution offering this Board's deepest sympathies to the family of Dorothy Henry, during their time of sorrow.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-460 FREEHOLDER ANGEL G. ESTRADA:** Resolution recognizing the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless and congratulating their 2018 Award Recipients at their "There's No Place Like Home" Annual Reception.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-461 FREEHOLDER CHRISTOPHER HUDAK:** Resolution opposing the closing of the Post Office Substation on St. Georges Avenue in Linden, NJ.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-462 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI & FREEHOLDER CHRISTOPHER HUDAK:** Congratulating Trevor Martin of Boy Scout Troop 75, Cranford, upon attaining the rank of Eagle Scout.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-463 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Resolution congratulating the Westfield Historical Society as they celebrate their 50th Anniversary; furthermore congratulating the winner of the 2018 Volunteer Presidential Award and the winner of the 2018 Trustee Award.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-464 VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI, FREEHOLDER LINDA CARTER & FREEHOLDER ANGELA R. GARRETSON: Proclaiming the week of May 13 through May 19, 2018 as National Women's Health Week throughout the County of Union.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-465 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS & FREEHOLDER ANGELA R. GARRETSON: Congratulating the County Volunteer of the Year award recipients and the Municipal Volunteer of the Year award recipients by the Local Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (LACADA) at its Recognition Dinner on May 8, 2018.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-466 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS: Congratulating the award recipients of the Union County Educational Services Foundation at their Awards reception on May 10th.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-467 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS & FREEHOLDER ALEXANDER MIRABELLA: Resolution recognizing the heroic efforts of Roselle Park Deputy Fire Chief Steve Thompson and Roselle Park Police Patrolman Bobby Harms, with the assistance of other emergency response personnel, as they rescued a man from a burning vehicle.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-468 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS, FREEHOLDER BRUCE H. BERGEN & FREEHOLDER CHRISTOPHER HUDAK: Resolution congratulating the Linden Satellite Rotary Club on its establishment as decreed at the Linden Rotary Induction and Kickoff ceremony.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

2018-469 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS & VICE CHAIRMAN BETTE JANE KOWALSKI: Resolution recognizing the 200 Club of Union County and congratulating the 17 recipients of the distinguished Valor Award for their heroic acts above and beyond the call of duty at their 49th Annual Valor Awards luncheon.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-470 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS:** Resolution proclaiming the week of May 13 through May 19, 2018 as National Police Week throughout the County of Union.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-471 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS, FREEHOLDER ANGEL G. ESTRADA & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Resolution recognizing and commending Elizabeth Councilman Frank Cuesta for his efforts with the Elizabeth's Promise Awards Inc., a nonprofit 501 c 3 organization created by Councilman Cuesta for the sole purpose of raising scholarship funds for deserving high school students from Elizabeth.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-472 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS, FREEHOLDER ALEXANDER MIRABELLA & THE ENTIRE BOARD:** Resolution recognizing the efforts of Joseph O'Neill, Josue Jaramillo, US Navy Operation Specialist 2nd Class Jorge Vasquez, NJ Veterans Network and Union High School JROTC for their service to military veterans as the Board celebrates the month of May, 2018 as Military Appreciation Month throughout Union County.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

- 2018-473 CHAIRMAN SERGIO GRANADOS & FREEHOLDER ALEXANDER MIRABELLA:** Resolution recognizing May 17, 2018 as International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia (IDAHOT) as a message of solidarity against homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, and all forms of hate facing LGBTQ people in our communities and across the globe.

On a motion made by Vice Chairman Kowalski and seconded by Freeholder Mirabella, roll call showed nine members voting in the affirmative.

PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION

This meeting is open to the public comment on any governmental issue that a member of the public feels may be of concern to the residents of the county.

Bruce Paterson, of Garwood, stated that his previous question relative to the County's debt was in relation to the total amount bonded for various projects. He inquired as to the County's total bonding capacity in dollars.

Mr. Paterson, noted that Freeholder Estrada voted in the negative relative to the 2018 bonds. He commented on Freeholder Jalloh's vote against the budget. He made comments relative to the percentage of the county's budget funded through taxes (he stated it was at

74%). He made comments relative to the new 10% cap on property taxes, and suggested the Board consider the impact on county residents of the tax policy.

Chairman Granados advised that the County's bonding capacity is \$1.3 billion, adding that the County has issued \$598 million in authorized debt.

Seeing no other comments, Chairman Granados closed public comment.

FREEHOLDER REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Freeholder Garretson made comments congratulating the County's collegiate graduates, especially those from Kean University. She made comments relative to her participation in an Immigrant College Student Press Conference hosted by Governor Murphy; noting that she was proud to join honored dignitaries and various advocacy groups such as Union County's Make the Road New Jersey. She made comments relative to Union County College's acapella group's performance (at the New Jersey Association of Counties Conference). She emphasized the need of elected officials and governments to embrace and support the talented youth of the county.

Freeholder Bergen made comments in response to the speaker's (Mr. Paterson) comments relative to the percentage of the budget being funded by taxes. He stated while he joins in his frustration, he differed in his opinion as to the cause. Freeholder Bergen stated that the State of New Jersey, and to some extent the Federal Government, has cut funds provided to municipalities, boards of educations and to county governments. He stated that the Board has done an excellent job in balancing between providing services and keeping the County taxes at a reasonable rate. He also made comments refuting the claim that the Board does not grasping the budget, in so far as to the surplus and other issues.

Freeholder Bergen made comments relative to a number of awards the County has received. He advised that the County's Office of Cultural Heritage and Affairs received two national achievement awards from the National Association of Counties: receiving an award for the County's Feltville Interpretation Program for its contribution to the Arts, Culture and Historic Preservation, and another award recognizing "civic education and public information" as a result of several county projects including: the History Card Series, the County's signage relative to its involvement in the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage and our support of the National Parks Passport Program.

Freeholder Bergen made comments relative to ICE and Immigration as it related to an article published in the Star Ledger on May 6, 2018, noting the federal administration's policies are unfair and contrary to the underlining principles of the United States. He encouraged residents to read the article.

Freeholder Carter made comments relative to the County's 6th Annual Union County Women Mean Business Networking event on Wednesday, May 23, 2018. She stated that the guest speaker will be First Lady of New Jersey, Mrs. Tammy Murphy.

Freeholder Carter made comments relative to the County's Annual Rhythm and Blues by the Park Music Festival on Saturday, June 2, 2018. She noted the headline act will be the Ohio Players. She encouraged all to enjoy the event.

Freeholder Estrada made comments clarifying his position as it related to his vote on the budget. He stated his concerns relative to the capital budget (in the amount in excess of \$70 million). He made comments relative to the surplus, and noted the fiscal appropriateness in adopting the CAP Bank resolution. He made comments relative to foreclosures in Union County.

Freeholder Hudak made comments relative to the budget, noting that coming out of the recession of 2008, the County's financial status was such: increasing surplus, tax increases are lower and level, and the County's AAA Bond Rating is strong.

Freeholder Jalloh made comments commending the young people who participated in Law in Government Day at Linden High School, noting that the Freeholders had a table present at the event. He congratulated all the (college) graduates of 2018; particularly the graduates from Kean University.

Freeholder Mirabella made comments relative to International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, and all forms of hate. He noted that the Board forwarded along a proclamation requesting each of the twenty other Board of Chosen Freeholders (in New Jersey) adopts a similar resolution to show an alliance of solidarity against hate and for equality. He invited the public to attend the County's Pride Month celebration on June 4, 2018 on the Courthouse steps on Broad Street in Elizabeth with a public Pride Flag Raising Ceremony. He made comments relative to the Pride Prom on June 15th and the 2nd Annual Family Pride Picnic on June 16, 2018.

Freeholder Mirabella made comments relative to the County budget. He thanked Chairman Granados for his directive to the Board to work towards the lowest increase in 16 years, noting he was proud to be a part of the finance committee in support of this goal. He congratulated Director Taylor and Fiscal Committee Chairman Bergen. He commented on the County's AAA bond rating, and the County's financial strength.

Vice Chairman Kowalski made comments relative to National Community Action Month, and the various Community Action Agencies within the County who assist to elevate poverty; noting that the Union County Department of Human Services is one of over a thousand Community Action Agencies in the United States. She noted that the Department of Human Services work with local organizations to assist those in poverty to have access to resources and guidance in order to improve their lives. She made comments relative to the County's partners and the events they promoted to assist individuals.

Chairman Granados thanked County Manager Oatman, Parks Director Zuber and his staff for ensuring the County would be able to open the Walter Ulrich Memorial Pool in Rahway Park on Memorial Day weekend; the earliest opening to date.

Chairman Granados made comments relative to an event he participated (and was joined by Trust Fund Chairman Mirabella and Vice Chairman Kowalski) in relative to 88 garden projects across the County of Union from either the Union County Kids Dig In Program or the Union County Means Green Program. He noted that not only do the gardens benefit local schools and municipalities, but also grow produce to benefit local soup kitchens and pantries.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Granados called for a motion to adjourn.

On a motion made by Freeholder Mirabella and seconded by Freeholder Carter, a voice vote showed nine members of the Board voted in the affirmative. Meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm.

UNION COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS 2018 MEETING SCHEDULE

Please note that meetings are regularly held on Thursday evenings. Agenda Setting Sessions and Regular Meetings are held at 7:00pm in the Freeholders' Meeting Room, Administration Building, 10 Elizabethtown Plaza, 6th Floor, Elizabeth, New Jersey, unless otherwise specified. In the event an Agenda Setting Session and Regular Meeting are held on the same night, the Agenda Setting Session will commence at 7:00pm and the Regular Meeting will commence as soon as possible after the Agenda Setting Session.

Persons requiring a sign language interpreter should contact the Office of the Clerk of the Board at 908-527-4140.

REORGANIZATION MEETING - SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2018 at 12:00 pm Assignment Judge Karen M. Cassidy's Courtroom, 2 Broad Street, Elizabeth, NJ

AGENDA SETTING SESSION

January 18, 2018

February 1, 2018
February 15, 2018

March 1, 2018*
March 22, 2018

April 12, 2018
April 26, 2018

May 10, 2018**
May 24, 2018

June 7, 2018
June 21, 2018

July 12, 2018

August 9, 2018

September 6, 2018
September 27, 2018

October 4, 2018
October 25, 2018

November 8, 2018

December 13, 2018
December 20, 2018

REGULAR MEETINGS

January 25, 2018

February 8, 2018
February 15, 2018

March 8, 2018
March 22, 2018

April 19, 2018
April 26, 2018

May 17, 2018
May 24, 2018

June 14, 2018***
June 21, 2018

July 19, 2018

August 16, 2018

September 13, 2018
September 27, 2018

October 11, 2018
October 25, 2018

November 29, 2018

December 13, 2018
December 20, 2018

*March 1, 2018 Agenda Setting Session was cancelled and rescheduled for March 8, 2018 at 7pm. The originally scheduled Regular Meeting for March 8, 2018 at 7:00pm was rescheduled to immediately start following the completion of the Agenda Setting Session.

**May 10, 2018 Agenda Setting Session was cancelled and rescheduled for May 3, 2018 at 7pm.

***June 14, 2018 Regular Meeting was cancelled and rescheduled for June 7, 2018 to commence immediately after the conclusion of the scheduled June 7, 2018 Agenda Setting Session.