

SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE COUNCIL SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 29, 2024 - 7:00 PM

Virtual Webex Meeting

To access information on how to use WebEx to join the meeting, please click on the following link: <https://www.southorange.org/800/WebEx-FAQs>

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Collum called the meeting to order at approximately 7 pm:

2. Roll Call

Mayor Collum
Councilman Brown
Councilmember Greenberg
Councilmember Haskins
Councilwoman Hartshorn Hilton
Councilwoman Jones
Councilmember Lewis-Chang
Ms. Doran, Village Administrator
Mr. Rother, Village Counsel - Absent
Mr. Otis, Village Counsel
Ms. Davis, Village Clerk

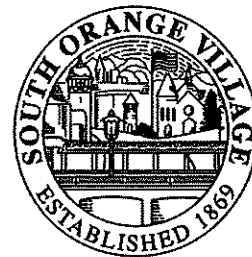
3. Meeting Notice Statement

Clerk Davis read the following statement:

In accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act of the State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the official newspapers of the Village, posted on the Village's website and filed in the Office of the Village Clerk indicating that this meeting is being held virtually via Cisco WebEx video conferencing. During a remote meeting, participants, including members of the public may be muted by the host. However, there will be an opportunity for them to participate and speak during the public portion of the meeting where participants will be unmuted at their request. Official action may be taken.

4. Ordinance for Second Reading

A. 2024-15 AN ORDINANCE OF SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE ADVANCING THE SALE OF THE VILLAGE'S WATER SYSTEM AND AUTHORIZING A



PROPOSAL TO BE PRINTED ON THE BALLOT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE VOTERS WITHIN THE VILLAGE AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024, PROVIDING FOR THE SALE OF THE VILLAGE'S WATER SYSTEM TO NEW JERSEY AMERICAN WATER, INC.

Mayor Collum gave an overview of the proposed ordinance and the establishment of the water task force. She explained the task force members discussed the overall cost, state mandates, outsourcing, potential sale and proposed sale price. Mayor Collum clarified that South Orange does not have its own water supply, operations and maintenance is currently outsourced and the infrastructure is a 150-year old system that requires a lot of upgrades of the next ten years. She mentioned the information will be posted on the landing page of the Village website very soon.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Former South Orange Village President Douglas Newman mentioned he served as a member of the task force and gave a brief background of South Orange's water system being with East Orange Water for 20 years and the last 10 years with New Jersey American Water. Mr. Newman stated the members of the task force agreed with selling the water.

There were some members of the public and a member from the Food and Water Watch Organization that were present that were opposed to the sale and expressed concerns with regards to rate increases, privatizing the system, meter upgrades and questioned how the system was previously ran by East Orange Water.

Mayor Collum explained that any rate request would need have to be made to the Board of Public Utilities. Also she welcomed the Food and Water Watch Organization to submit a proposal and mentioned they can request to review all documents.

Councilman Brown moved to adopt Ordinance #2024-15 for second reading/final adoption, seconded by Councilmember Lewis-Chang.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilman Brown	Yes
Councilmember Greenberg	Yes
Councilmember Haskins	No
Councilwoman Hilton	No
Councilwoman Jones	Yes



Councilmember Lewis-Chang Yes
Motion carried.

5. Public Comment

Village Mayor opened the meeting for public comments:
Mr. Vitale resident of South Orange mentioned it was scary to think the process is being politicalized but appreciated all the hard work.

Mr. Newman, former Village President urged the residents to read the reports that will be place on the website. Also, mentioned that the task force reached out to other towns that sold their water systems to New Jersey American water and those that use New Jersey American Water.

6. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mayor Collum adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:10 pm.

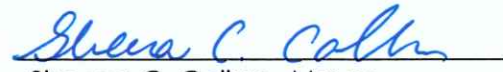
***These minutes are a summary and the actual statements can be found on the video located on the Village's website at the following link:**

<https://southorangetwpnj.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2877/media>

ATTEST:

TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHORANGEVILLAGE


Ojetti E. Davis, Village Clerk


Sheena C. Collum, Mayor