

**SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE
GARFIELD MAYOR AND COUNCIL
JANUARY 10, 2025
7:30P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield was called to order on Friday, January 10, 2025 at 7:30PM in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 111 Outwater Lane, Garfield, New Jersey.

2. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE:

Whereas, Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of the State of New Jersey requires at the commencement of every meeting a Statement of Compliance be read by the presiding officer.

Now, Therefore Be Advised, that the meeting requirements for this meeting have been met by publishing a special meeting notice in The Record and Herald News and by posting such notice in the office of the City Clerk as well as in a public place within the Municipal Building, and by notifying interested citizens. Said notice was posted and transmitted on January 7, 2025.

3. ROLL CALL:

On Roll Call present members were: Councilmembers Rigoglioso & Delaney, Deputy Mayor Kane, Deputy Mayor/Mayoral Advisor Raymond, and Mayor Garnto. Also present were City Manager/City Clerk Delaney and City Attorney Richard Malagiere.

4. PRAYER & FLAG SALUTE:

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilman Rigoglioso and seconded by Deputy Mayor Kane to approve the December 30, 2024 Special Meeting & January 1, 2025 Reorganization Meeting minutes. The motions carried unanimously.

6. RESOLUTIONS:

R-35-25	Re-Naming “Champion Park” to “Columbus Park – City of Champions”
R-36-25	Adjustment of the Construction Contract Amount for the Columbus Park Improvements Project
R-37-25	Establishing the Election of Members of the Garfield Board of Education as the Third Tuesday in April

7. PUBLIC HEARING:

8. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS:

9. ADJOURNMENT:

**CITY OF GARFIELD
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION R-35-25**

RESOLUTION BY: DEPUTY MAYOR RAYMOND

SECONDED BY: DEPUTY MAYOR KANE

RE-NAMING “CHAMPION PARK” TO “COLUMBUS PARK – CITY OF CHAMPIONS”

WHEREAS, the City of Garfield is the owner of the park property located at 394 Outwater Lane in the City of Garfield, County of Bergen and State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, this park property located at 394 Outwater Lane was named “Columbus Park” for many years, likely since its inception and dedication as a park in the City of Garfield; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution R-406-24, the park property at 394 Outwater Lane was re-named “Champion Park”; and

WHEREAS, Christopher Columbus was a historical and religious figure of Italian heritage; and

WHEREAS, the City of Garfield is often referred to as the “City of Champions”; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield desires to rename the park property at 394 Outwater Lane “Columbus Park – City of Champions”;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Council of Garfield that the park property located at 394 Outwater Lane in the City of Garfield is hereby re-named “Columbus Park – City of Champions”; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any and all signage required to give effect to this resolution is hereby approved and authorized and the City Manager is hereby authorized and empowered to take all steps necessary to effectuate this resolution.

APPROVED: JANUARY 10, 2025

Everett E. Garnto Jr., Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC

City Manager/City Clerk

Record of Council Vote on Passage

	AYE	NAY	Abstain	Absent
Rigoglioso	X			
Delaney	X			
Kane	X			
Raymond	X			
Garnto	X			

This resolution was approved by the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield at a Special Meeting held on the 10th day of January 2025. Signed and sealed before me.

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC
City Manager/City Clerk

Dated

Councilman Rigoglioso stated that prior to the improvements, the park was not properly used and that now it is perfect. He said a significant amount of money was spent on the improvements, which was money well spent as it is the crown jewel of the City. He gave kudos to all involved in its development.

Councilman Delaney acknowledged members from UNICO in the audience and said that it was never the previous council's intention to put down Christopher Columbus with the renaming of the park. He advised that it was his idea to relocate the statue so that a monument area can be designated inside the park, similar to Yankee Stadium, with additional monuments that are scattered throughout the City. Councilman Delaney said that he is fine with renaming the park back to Columbus but noted that he hopes spending \$22,000.00 to do so doesn't take away from other items the park needs.

Deputy Mayor/Mayoral Advisor Raymond said that Christopher Columbus is an individual to be honored and talked about the UNICO ceremonies held in the park to honor him. She stated that she does not like the statute at its current position and would like to see it relocated in the future.

Mayor Garnto stated that he likes the idea of a monument area but that he would like to see it at the opposite corner of the park. He went on to say that it could be discussed with the engineer in the future. Mayor Garnto also noted that he is in favor and supports the park's improvements but was not in favor of the name change done by the previous council.

**CITY OF GARFIELD
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION R-36-25**

**RESOLUTION BY: COUNCILMAN RIGOGLIOSO
SECONDED BY: DEPUTY MAYOR RAYMOND**

**ADJUSTMENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AMOUNT FOR THE
COLUMBUS PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT**

WHEREAS, Resolution R-539-23 of the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield has awarded the contract for the Columbus Park Improvements Project to Let It Grow, Inc., 52 Ackerson Street, River Edge, NJ 07661 on February 16, 2024, in the amount of \$5,137,783.00 for Base Bid plus Alternate Bids 'B', 'C'; and 'D', plus Change Order No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No 5, No. 6, and No. 7 for an adjusted contract amount of \$5,643,767.11; and

WHEREAS, the total amount to complete this project is \$5,643,767.11; and

WHEREAS, the park was renamed to "Champion Park" via resolution R-406-24 and the current Mayor and Council is desirous of reverting the name back to "Columbus Park – City of Champions"; and

WHEREAS, to effectuate said change additional funds are needed for the replacement of installed signage; and

WHEREAS, this resolution will serve to increase the adjusted contract amount of \$5,643,767.11 by Change Order No. 8 in the amount of \$21,925.24;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Garfield does hereby approve Change Order No. 8 in the amount of \$21,925.24 to adjust the contract amount of the Columbus Park Improvements Project to \$5,665,692.35.

I, Nicholas Prochilo, Chief Financial Officer for the City of Garfield do hereby confirm that there are sufficient funds available for this resolution.

Nicholas Prochilo, Chief Financial Officer

January 9, 2025
Dated

APPROVED: JANUARY 10, 2025

Everett E. Garnto Jr., Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC
City Manager/City Clerk

Record of Council Vote on Passage

	AYE	NAY	Abstain	Absent
Rigoglioso	X			
Delaney	X			
Kane	X			
Raymond	X			
Garnto	X			

This resolution was approved by the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield at a Special Meeting held on the 10th day of January 2025. Signed and sealed before me.

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC
City Manager/City Clerk

Dated

Councilman Delaney advised that there was a non-bind referendum to switch the Board of Education election to November, of which he initially supported to get a higher voter turnout and save money. However, he said he has seen the latest Board of Education spend money poorly and create unnecessary positions without concern of the taxpayers. Councilman Delaney noted that he is in favor of the change so that taxpayers have more say in the district's budget.

Deputy Mayor Kane stated that transparency is important and that changing the election will lead to more transparency. He noted that he hopes it will encourage residents become more aware of the district's budget and will hold them more accountable with unnecessary spending.

Deputy Mayor/Mayoral Advisor Raymond said that the school district has changed significantly since she retired. She noted that high paying jobs have been created but yet there are issues that aren't addressed, such as having no internet in the schools. Ms. Raymond questioned the district's priorities and said that she feels it is important to vote on the budget.

Mayor Garnto noted that he served on the Board of Education for seven years so he understands that budgets have to go up, however, he feels that the spending is out of control. He raised concerns about unnecessary, high paying positions.

**CITY OF GARFIELD
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
RESOLUTION R-37-25**

**RESOLUTION BY: COUNCILMAN DELANEY
SECONDED BY: DEPUTY MAYOR RAYMOND**

**ESTABLISHING THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE GARFIELD BOARD OF
EDUCATION AS THE THIRD TUESDAY IN APRIL**

WHEREAS, P.L. 2011, c. 202 (N.J.S.A. §19:60-1.1(a)) authorizes changing the election date of school board members from the third Tuesday in April to the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November (the General Election); and

WHEREAS, P.L. 2011, c. 202 (N.J.S.A. §19:60-1.1(b)) authorizes changing the election date of school board members back to the third Tuesday in April from the General Elections; and

WHEREAS, such action requires the adoption of a resolution by a school district or the municipality or municipalities constituting such district, as set forth in P.L. 2011, c. 202(N.J.S.A. §19:60-1.1; and

WHEREAS, P.L. 2011, c. 202 (N.J.S.A. §19:60-1.1) requires that the change once made to the General Election must remain in effect for four (4) years before the election can be changed back to the third Tuesday in April; and

WHEREAS, P.L. 2011, c. 202 (N.J.S.A. §19:60-1.1) eliminates the annual voter referendum on the proposed general fund tax levy (i.e., the base budget which is at or below the statutory tax levy cap) in school districts where Board of Education members are elected at the General Election; and

WHEREAS, on or about June 2, 2020, the City of Garfield Mayor and Council issued Resolution 20-147 Establishing the Election of Members of the Garfield Board of Education as the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November; and

WHEREAS, the City of Garfield Board of Education budget has increased every year from 2021 to 2024 and the taxpayers have had no oversight over the budget; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield that the tax payers of the City of Garfield are best protected from Garfield Board of Education budget increases by moving the City of Garfield school board members' election to the third Tuesday in April where the proposed school budget is presented in an annual voter

referendum;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to P.L. 2011, c. 202 (N.J.S.A. §19:60-1.1(b)), the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield hereby changes the annual election date for school board members from the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November to the third Tuesday in April, beginning in 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Bergen County Clerk; the City of Garfield Board of Education Secretary and the Garfield City Clerk.

APPROVED: JANUARY 10, 2025

Everett E. Garnto Jr., Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC
City Manager/City Clerk

Record of Council Vote on Passage

	AYE	NAY	Abstain	Absent
Rigoglioso			X	
Delaney	X			
Kane	X			
Raymond	X			
Garnto	X			

This resolution was approved by the Mayor and Council of the City of Garfield at a Special Meeting held on the 10th day of January 2025. Signed and sealed before me.

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC
City Manager/City Clerk

Dated

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ralph Hamilton, UNICO President, thanked the Governing Body for renaming the park back to Columbus Park. He requested that the council consider relocating the statue, installing a camera at the statue, and re-installing the pavers purchased by individuals through a former UNICO project.

City Manager/City Clerk Delaney advised that the pavers could not be re-installed due to liability purposes with the contractor as the contractor has to submit a maintenance bond and the material and age of the pavers could be a concern. She stated that in order for the pavers to be re-installed they would have had to be purchased and installed through the contractor. Ms. Delaney also cautioned the council on relocated the statue and monument area as it was very costly and could affect areas of the park such as the infrastructure, wells, and sprinkler system.

Allan Focarino, MacDonal Street, stated that he is tickled pink that the Council voted in favor of the name change and looks forward to the UNICO Columbus Day ceremony tradition in the park. He noted that the City has a large Italian-American community base and also said that he supports the taxpayers having more say in the Board of Education election and budget.

MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Rigoglioso said that it was a great night to celebrate the Firematic Reorganization and was happy to be a part of fixing items that were wrong. He advised UNICO that the name change of Columbus Park done by the previous council was not done with malintent or to slight them.

Councilman Delaney inquired about when the Board of Education election change would go into effect. He stated that it was a smart move and thanked the Council for changing it.

Deputy Mayor Kane thanked everyone for coming. He noted that he feels the improvements at Columbus Park look great and that he looks forward to more City events taking place there.

Deputy Mayor/Mayoral Advisor Raymond stated that it was a positive night and that she is very happy with the Columbus Park name change. She went on to say that UNICO has spent a lot of time on their endeavors related to Columbus Park and that she would like to look into a sponsor for the relocation of the monument area. Ms. Raymond noted that she is not happy with the spending of the current Board of Education and that the changing of the election was a smart move to give residents more say in their budget process.

Mayor Garnto shared that the Garfield Fire Department is top notch and that the Council will be looking into a stipend program for the volunteers. He went on to say that he is glad the Council supported the name change of Columbus Park. Mayor Garnto thanked the Council for their support in the changing of the Board of Education election as he feels the Board is spending money carelessly.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Deputy Mayor/Mayoral Advisor Raymond and seconded by Mayor Garnto to adjourn. The motions carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Delaney, MPA, RMC, CMC
City Manager/City Clerk

These meeting minutes were approved at the January 21, 2025 Regular meeting of the Mayor & Council.