

BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE
Mayor & Borough Council Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2025

Mayor Mary Jane Canose called this meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Council Members, Jena McCredie, Al Ribeiro, Rich Traynor, Christine Zamarra, and Ross Zazzarino. Also present were John Pidgeon, Borough Attorney, Nancy Malool, Administrator, and Anthony Suriano, Borough Clerk. Council Member Jeff Roos was absent.

STATEMENT OF PRESIDING OFFICER

Notice of this meeting was provided to the Bernardsville News and Courier News, filed with the Municipal Clerk and posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board on December 5, 2024.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public.

Fran Daley, Library Director, said the Library has begun preparing its 2026 budget and requested guidance on any cost-of-living percentage the governing body may be using, noting that the Library Board typically aligns its planning with the municipality. She said that the Library Foundation and Friends of the Bernardsville Library recently held a well-received donor appreciation event, expressing gratitude for the support and noting that some additional contributions were received following the gathering.

Bob Graham, Dryden Road, read from a prepared statement. He said he sent emails to the Mayor and Council about topics regarding parking ordinances, potential cost savings through the use of restroom trailers at the Polo Grounds pavilion, and the feasibility of a piano key weir at the dam. He said he has concerns regarding RPM's scattered site affordable housing projects. He asked council to address topics such as Memorial Park Dam, parking ordinances due to the elimination of the Amerman lot, use of the OEM budget on housing developments, preserve the option of "off-site construction", on-site power generation for large housing projects. He offered to donate commercial appliances and information-technology equipment to support Borough facilities.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Canose closed the open session.

MAYOR & COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Special Events Ordinance, council reviewed the latest revisions to the proposed Special Events Ordinance. It was noted that two changes requested at the last council meeting have been added: 1) an exemption for school and church events held on-site in the normal

course of their operations, and 2) a requirement that the Administrator act on applications within ten days, after which approval would be automatic. Discussion took place on adjusting attendance thresholds by setting it as 250 people for private property while lowering the threshold to 100 people for events on Borough property. This is to ensure adequate coordination of emergency services. Council discussed school events that regularly exceed attendance estimates and the feasibility of requiring individual applications for every activity. Council agreed that schools could submit an annual schedule of events expected to draw more than 250 attendees, with separate applications required only for events not on the schedule. Mr. Pidgeon said houses of worship would remain exempt for typical religious services and related activities. Council discussed public communication of the ordinance noting that issues may arise and outreach would likely evolve because of it. Council agreed to move forward with introducing the ordinance on November 24th with public hearing/adoption on December 15th.

NJ American Water Projects, Ms. Malool said the recent water main replacement work along Boylan Terrace and Mine Avenue had caused intermittent closures, and the next phase will require tunneling beneath the railroad tracks to connect service lines. This work involves excavating a 22-foot pit on Boylan Terrace and a second pit within the train station lot, resulting in the temporary loss of 20–30 parking spaces in the train station lot. She said NJ Transit requires continuous 24-hour drilling once work begins under the tracks. While the start date was to be prior to the holidays, it was noted that Mayor Canose reached out to Senator Bramnick and the start date of this project will be moved up to January 5th in order to avoid impacts during the holiday shopping season. Sidewalks and paving projects in the neighborhood will proceed after the work is completed. Ms. Malool said the water main extension serving the sewer plant and nearby affordable housing site is expected to finish this week with final paving in the spring. Somerset County plans to pave Mount Airy Road from Olcott Square to Prospect Street and again from South Street to the town line next summer. Council discussed the sidewalk gap along the area of Moraine Crest on Mount Airy Road and asked to reach out to Somerset County for sidewalk completion.

Farmers' Market, Winter & Summer in 2026, council consent was given to hold the Winter and Summer Farmers' Market in 2026 at the train station lot. It was noted that the Winter Market is on Saturdays from January 17th to March 28th from 10:00am to 12:00pm. The Summer Market is on Saturdays from June 6th to December 12th from 9:00am to 1:00pm, with no market on Far Hills Race Day and the Saturday following Thanksgiving. A resolution confirming approval will be on the November 24th agenda.

Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, Ms. Malool said the manual is still being worked on and not ready for discussion at this time.

2026 Council Meeting Schedule, council consent was given for the 2026 meeting schedule. It was noted that the September work meeting will be moved to Tuesday, September 22nd due to Yom Kippur being on Monday, September 21st. A resolution confirming approval will be on the November 24th agenda.

Main Street Request for Additional Week to Post Signs for the Holiday Parade, council consent was given to Main Street Bernardsville to post signs for their holiday parade for more than a two week period as permitted by ordinance. A resolution confirming approval will be on the November 24th agenda.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Presentations

Mayor Canose said presentations at the November 24, 2025 council meeting will be as follows:

Police Accreditation, Harry Delgado of the New Jersey State Chiefs Association will be attending to present the official certificate.

Main Street/Fire Company, representatives from the Fire Company and Main Street Bernardsville will be present for the presentation of a fundraising check of just over \$6,000 raised through the recent "Taste of Our Town" event.

Third Pillar Solar, Community Solar Project, representatives of Third Pillar Solar will do a presentation regarding a proposed floating solar installation at the quarry. It was noted that the project requires Planning Board approval rather than Council, but Third Pillar requested coming to Council as borough property adjoins the quarry location.

Ordinances

Public Hearing, Mayor Canose said a public hearing on the following ordinances will be held at the November 24, 2025 Council Meeting at 7:00pm:

Ordinance #2025-2030, **AUTHORIZING 2026 SALARIES & WAGES FOR NON-CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE**

Ordinance #2025-2031, **APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$100,000 FOR REPLACEMENT OF SBR BLOWER FOR SEWER PLANT & GENERAL CAPITAL ITEMS**

Ordinance #2025-2032, **ADDING ONE NEW SERGEANT POSITION IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "ADMINISTRATION"**

Introduction of the following ordinance(s) at the November 24, 2025 council meeting:

Ordinance #2025-2033, **APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$200,000 FOR CONNECTION OF THE WWTP TO THE NJ AMERICAN WATER, WATER MAIN**

Ordinance #2025-2034, ESTABLISHING FIVE-WAY STOP INTERSECTION AT CLAREMONT ROAD/MINE MOUNT ROAD/SENEY DRIVE INTERSECTION AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING CHAPTER 7 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED “TRAFFIC”

From earlier discussion, Ordinance #2025-2035, **REPLACING THE BOROUGH SPECIAL EVENT ORDINANCE AND AMENDING CHAPTER 4 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED “GENERAL LICENSING”**

Resolutions

Mayor Canose said the following resolutions will be considered for adoption at the November 24th Council Meeting:

- Bill List
- Bid Award for Dayton Crescent Road Improvement Project
- Changing the Custodian of the Recreation Department Petty Cash Fund
- Authorization of Sewer Refund
- Authorizing the Cancellation of 2023 & 2024 Property Taxes, Block 106, Lot 28 – Boylan Terrace
- Establishing Decal Fees and Other Regulations for Municipal Parking Lots During 2026
- Authorizing Refund of Stormwater Escrow Account 04-280-7051-0100 Stephan – 477-1 Mine Brook Road
- Accepting a Donation to the Bernardsville Police Department
- Approving Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
- Accepting the Resignation of Robert Rosendale, Building Subcode Official
- Accepting the Resignation of Dennis Bettler, Fire Subcode Official
- A Resolution Opposing S-4736
- Appointing Steve Mahoney as Acting Building Subcode Official
- Accepting the Resignation of Christian Clarke, Driver/Laborer

Comments from the Mayor and Council on resolutions for November 24th included:

Opposing S-4736, Mr. Pidgeon said the bill would allow churches and nonprofit organizations to develop their properties for affordable or mixed-use housing at densities up to 40 units per acre and with building heights exceeding local limits by one story.

OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY BE REQUIRED BY THE COUNCIL

Municipal Attorney Report – there were no questions or comments from council on Mr. Pidgeon’s monthly report.

Environmental Commission, Mr. Traynor said the Commission discussed The Highlands. It was noted that participation in the Highlands program opens access to grant funding. Mr. Traynor said the Commission is exploring opportunities to reduce

routine mowing by converting certain roadside or non-recreational grassy areas into naturalized plantings such as pollinator gardens.

Board of Health, Ms. McCredie said the Board met tonight but she was unable to attend. She will follow up with Board Chair Len Friedman.

HPAC, Mr. Traynor said the committee's last meeting included discussion on the historical signs that Spencer Peck is proposing.

Shade Tree Committee, the committee met on the November 13th and is focusing on a full review and rewrite of the borough's shade tree ordinance. They are also hosting educational workshops, including a pruning session. The committee is waiting for Zoning Enforcement Officer, Bill Roberts, to finish reviewing the draft revisions. Mr. Pidgeon will also review. The committee's new ordinance proposal will ultimately come to the Council for consideration.

Correspondence

Somerset Hills Towing, it was noted that a letter from Somerset Hills Towing was received regarding updating municipal towing rates. Council acknowledged the letter. No action was taken.

Unfinished Business

Bollards, Ms. Malool discussed a plan to restrict vehicular traffic on the Polo Grounds turf field using removable, lockable bollards. The bollards are approximately three feet tall, spaced to allow wheelchairs and strollers to pass. They can be folded down with a key to allow emergency vehicles access. The proposed placement was mapped out, considering the location of the future pavilion and the existing walking path. Council discussed the following:

- Emergency access: Police, Fire, and EMS would have keys; bollards can also be removed entirely if needed.
- Cost estimate: Approximately \$1,000.
- Pavilion placement: The bollards would not interfere with the pavilion.
- Access: Timely access for EMTs outside municipal EMTs, such as Atlantic Health, was discussed. Police would provide immediate response and alternative access is possible if necessary.

Council consent was given to Ms. Malool to purchase the bollards and have them installed.

New Business

Civility Policy, Mayor Canose discussed a civility policy resolution. The intent is to formally support employees when encountering inappropriate behavior from the public

and to promote courteous communication across all municipal interactions, including council/board meetings. A resolution will be done at reorganization each year to set the policy.

2026 Appointments, Mayor Canose asked council to review the vacancies and terms expiring lists. She asked them to think about if they know anyone interested in being on a board/committee and to review the Skills Bank database. Appointments will be made at Reorganization.

Hardscrabble Road, Mayor Canose said we received our local aid grant in the amount of \$200,000 to pave Hardscrabble Road.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved to adjourn to an executive session to consider Pending Litigation and Attorney/Client Privilege and that the time when and circumstances under which the matter can be disclosed to the public is when it is finally resolved. The motion was seconded and approved with five yes votes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20p.m.
