

BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE
Mayor & Borough Council Meeting Minutes
September 29, 2025

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

PRESENTATIONS

Suplee Clooney & Co., 2024 Audit, John Swisher from Suplee Clooney was present to discuss the 2024 audit of the Borough of Bernardsville. Mr. Swisher said that there were no comments or recommendations in the audit that the Borough received. He said no issues with internal controls were found. He said that surplus levels in both the current fund and the sewer utility remain stable, which is positive as you do not want to see surplus go down. Mr. Swisher commended Borough staff for their cooperation and professionalism throughout the audit process including CFO Leslie Roberson and Administrator/QPA, Nancy Malool.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Zazzarino moved to approve the minutes of August 11, 2025 and August 25, 2025. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public.

Joe Rossi, Crest Drive, said he submitted a hold harmless agreement for the Christmas Tree lighting. He asked about the status of parking in the Borough. Mayor Canose said that Council meetings are not a forum for Q&A and advised Mr. Rossi to schedule an appointment with Ms. Malool for further discussion. Mr. Rossi expressed concerns regarding parking requirements and enforcement. He said restaurants are using private properties, streets, and sidewalks for parking without permission and that is not being enforced. He said there will be future parking issues once train service to New York City increases. He spoke against a restaurant at the train station and development at the post office. He said small businesses are struggling due to insufficient parking and delivery access.

Kristi MacDonald, Environmental Commission Advisor, said she wanted to speak about the major disposal of parkland. Mayor Canose said there will be a separate public hearing on that at 8:00pm.

Patrice Cummings, Spruce Place, spoke about a drainage easement at her property. It was moved by Mr. Zazzarino that this request to allow a two-inch septic pipe, 4' underground, through the 20ft easement is granted as long as it does not interfere with drainage and is subject to approval of the Borough Engineer. Mr. Traynor seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

Joe Rossi, Crest Drive, said that a light post in the center of town (Olcott Square triangle) has been out for over a year, with no progress on replacement. He said timers and panel box adjustments previously requested have not been installed. He feels it is unsafe and dark during evening hours. Mr. Rossi spoke about concerns he has about parking stating there is inadequate parking following removal of Mount Airy Road spaces and construction on other lots. He raised questions about where residents and visitors, including delivery trucks, will park safely. He suggested creating a public parking lot on certain properties. Mr. Rossi spoke about concerns he has about traffic. He said trucks delivering to restaurants and businesses are blocking streets, mounting sidewalks, and creating hazardous conditions. He said there are traffic backups through town. Mr. Rossi said he has concerns for a lack of ticketing for illegal parking. He said there is a need for loading zones, and better enforcement. Mayor Canose said long-term planning is in place and there is no immediate easy solution.

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

Request by Spencer Peck of Historical Markers, Mayor Canose said she would move this item up to this point on the agenda. Gerry Jo Cranmer, Chair of HPAC, was present. Ms. Cranmer spoke about a proposal brought forward by historian Spencer Peck, who is working with the NJ Historical Commission and Revolution NJ on a series of Revolutionary War markers. Bernardsville (formerly Vealtown) is identified as one of 14 towns along the historic route of New England troops marching south to join General Washington before the Battle of Trenton. Proposed marker locations considered were near the Firehouse and Borough Hall and at Ed English Park near the train station. The marker would be funded by the state program; if not, HPAC would pursue fundraising. Council consent was given, noting the project aligns with upcoming 250th anniversary celebration.

ORDINANCES (Public Hearing)

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2025-2026, **AMENDING SECTION 11-4 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES PENDING FORECLOSURE"**. Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. Traynor moved to pass Ordinance #2025-2026 on final reading and adopt as published. Mr. Zazzarino seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Ms. McCredie, Mr. Roos, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamorra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

ORDINANCES (Introduction)

Mr. Zazzarino moved that Ordinance #2025-2027, **REQUIRING THE PAYMENT OF DELINQUENT TAXES AS A CONDITION FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A MUNICIPAL LICENSE OR PERMIT AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED “ADMINISTRATION”**, be introduced by title, passed on first reading, published according to law, and that a public hearing be scheduled for a meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m., Monday, October 27, 2025. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

Ms. Zamarra moved that Ordinance #2025-2028, **AMENDING ORDINANCE #2024-2000 ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE VACATING A PORTION OF BERNARDS AVENUE WHICH IS OUTSIDE THE PAVED ROADWAY AND SIDEWALK AREA AND WHICH IS NECESSARY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT 63 BERNARDS AVENUE” BY CORRECTING THE DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA VACATED** be introduced by title, passed on first reading, published according to law, and that a public hearing be scheduled for a meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m., Monday, October 27, 2025. Ms. McCredie seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

Ms. McCredie moved that Ordinance #2025-2029, **AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE BERNARSVILLE FIRE COMPANY NO. 1 FIRST AID SQUAD AND AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED “ADMINISTRATION”** be introduced by title, passed on first reading, published according to law, and that a public hearing be scheduled for a meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m., Monday, October 27, 2025. Mr. Roos seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

RESOLUTIONS

- #25-170 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS (as of 8/20/25)**
- #25-171 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS (as of 9/10/25)**
- #25-172 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS (as of 9/24/25)**
- #25-173 AUTHORIZATION OF TAX REFUND**
- #25-174 APPROVING THE INSTALLATION OF ONE NEW FIRE
HYDRANT AS PART OF NJ AMERICAN WATER COMPANY’S
MINE BROOK ROAD WATER MAIN EXTENSION PROJECT**
- #25-175 AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF DEVELOPER’S AGREEMENT
WITH RPM FOR 63 BERNARDS AVENUE 100% AFFORDABLE
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY**

- #25-176 REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATIONS PER NJSA 40A:4-87, CLEAN COMMUNITIES**
- #25-177 REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATIONS PER NJSA 40A:4-87, 2022 RECYCLING TONNAGE GRANT**
- #25-178 REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATIONS PER NJSA 40A:4-87, PSE&G FOUNDATION, 2025 SUSTAINABLE JERSEY GRANT**
- #25-179 REQUESTING APPROVAL OF ITEMS OF REVENUE AND APPROPRIATIONS PER NJSA 40A:4-87, WATER RESOURCES PLANNING MANAGEMENT STORMWATER ASSISTANCE GRANT**
- #25-180 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN RENEWAL CONTRACTS WITH FAR HILLS COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL, SOMERSET HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND ST. ELIZABETH'S SCHOOL FOR SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS (SLEO III)**
- #25-181 AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF PART TIME SUBSTITUTE DISPATCHERS**
- #25-182 AUTHORIZING AN AMOUNT OF \$6,500 TO LOEFFLER POOL MANAGEMENT FOR WINTERIZATION OF THE MUNICIPAL POOL**
- #25-183 APPOINTING SAMANTHA D'ANTUONO AS A FULL TIME DISPATCHER**
- #25-184 ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION OF PATROLMAN SAMUEL PRADARITS**
- #25-185 ACCEPTING THE 2025 EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN (EOP) FOR THE BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE**
- #25-186 DAYTON CRESCENT GRANT EXTENSION REQUEST**
- #25-187 APPOINTMENT OF A TRUCK DRIVER/LABORER**
- #25-188 GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT (2024)**
- #25-189 APPROVING ITEMS OF BUSINESS FROM THE SEPTEMBER 15,**

2025 WORK MEETING

- #25-190 RESOLUTION TO TERMINATE ALL PARTICIPATION UNDER THE SHBP AND SEHBP (INCLUDING PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN AND/OR DENTAL PLAN COVERAGE)**
- #25-191 APPOINTING RYAN VALENTINO AS FIRE PREVENTION OFFICIAL AND STEVE WATERS AS FIRE INSPECTOR**
- #25-192 ACCEPTING A DONATION FROM THE BERNARDSVILLE LAW ENFORCEMENT FOUNDATION (BLEF)**

Mr. Roos moved to pass Resolutions #25-170 through #25-192, except #25-186. Mr. Zazzarino seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Ms. McCredie, Mr. Roos, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamarra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

REPORTS

Mayor's Update, Mayor Canose said the senior barbecue took place on August 28th and thanked Tom Silvia and Stephanie Brown in the Recreation Department for their coordination of this event. Mayor Canose met with school officials on August 29th regarding the upcoming referendum. She said representatives of the school district will attend the October council meeting to make a presentation. Mayor Canose met with members of the Bernardsville Law Enforcement Foundation (BLEF) to review their progress and future plans. Mayor Canose did a ribbon cutting at the Library when it opened after its new renovations. Mayor Canose thanked Fran Daley and Christine Zamarra for organizing the 9/11 ceremony. Mayor Canose said the borough will be featured in Business View Magazine. Mayor Canose received an interview request with NJDOT related to the Transit Village designation. There was a strong turnout for the Bag For Hunger fundraiser at ShopRite, and Ms. McCredie, Mr. Ribeiro, and Officer Naqvi participated. Mayor Canose met with FlashVote to plan the next community survey – Community Priorities and Quality of Life. Main Street Bernardsville held Taste of Our Town which drew 170 attendees and was also a fundraiser the Fire Company. As the Fire Company's Liaison, Mayor Canose is continuing coordination with the chief on capital needs and improving communication.

Administrator's Report, Ms. Malool said New Jersey American Water is going to be replacing the water main in the Boylan, Center, Prospect, West Street neighborhood. They have a two inch main that's increasing to four inches and they're starting today and will go into January. All of the residents were supposed to be notified last week by NJ American Water. She said this will probably delay our paving project in that neighborhood because we can't do that at the same time. She said later in the meeting one of the New Business items is about Somerset County paving Mount Airy Road in the spring, so hopefully NJ American Water will be out of that area. Ms. Malool spoke about the Dam Removal Project. Rippled Waters Engineering LLC is a contractor that assists the borough for engineering services for the proposed dam removal project. Mary Paist-Goldman of Rippled Waters had come to a council meeting in May 2022 with a presentation on dam removal. With new members on council, council members suggested

Ms. Paist-Goldman come to a future meeting and give an updated presentation on dam removal costs, inflation impacts, scope, and compliance requirements. Updated cost estimate for dam removal is \$3.4 million, significantly higher than earlier estimates (previously \$2.3 million). She said the borough has already bonded for approximately \$2.6 million.

Mr. Zazzarino moved to accept the monthly reports. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Correspondence

Letter from Richard Sasso, re: Seney Drive Extension, Mayor Canose said as a private road, residents are responsible for signage. The Borough does not provide or fund signs for private roads.

Unfinished Business

Stop Signs at Five Corners Intersection (Claremont Road), Somerset County has been investigating this topic for several years. Currently, stop signs are only on borough streets of the intersection as the county road (Claremont) traffic continues without stops. County intends to implement a five-way stop, though this may not include pedestrian crosswalks. Concerns raised about visibility and potential traffic order disruption if the through road on Claremont is changed to have a stop sign. It was suggested that a community discussion with landowners could help address safety and visibility concerns.

At 8:00pm, Ms. McCredie moved to adjourn the September 29th Borough Council meeting and begin the Major Disposal of Parkland Hearing for 71 & 75 Claremont Road. Mr. Traynor seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

A separate file with the transcript of the Major Disposal of Parkland Public Hearing will be on file in the Clerk's Office.

Mr. Zazzarino moved to reopen the September 29th Borough Council meeting. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

Council continued discussion on the Five Corners intersection. Concerns were that removal of the through road on Claremont may disrupt traffic order; visibility issues caused by trees and parked cars near the intersection; vehicles often fail to stop fully at the existing stop signs, creating safety risks. Some suggestions included Somerset County consultation with private landowners to address trees and fencing that impact visibility. Limiting parking near the intersection to improve sightlines. Possibly updating borough code to enforce traffic regulations effectively. Council agreed not to adopt any ordinance until visibility issues (trees, parking) are addressed. No action was taken pending further review of safety and enforcement measures.

New Business

Somerset County Paving Hours (CR525 – Mt Airy Road – Route 202 to Prospect Street), council discussed proposed paving from Prospect Street to Mount Airy/202, including timing and logistics. Nighttime paving was recommended to minimize disruption to schools, businesses, and traffic. Completion is dependent on coordination with New Jersey American Water and other ongoing work in the area. Somerset County indicated the paving will likely occur in spring. Council consent was to inform Somerset County that they prefer paving takes place at night.

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public.

Joe Rossi, Crest Drive, said he has concerns about incomplete county projects, including sidewalks from the end of the stone wall to Basking Ridge, which prevent safe access for children to recreational facilities. He highlighted ongoing issues with water runoff and erosion on Claremont Road, noting prior efforts by volunteers to clean and maintain the drainage system. He said there is a need for proper maintenance of fields, including drainage, fertilization, weed control, and safe access. He noted that school and community programs extensively use the fields, but funds collected from rentals are going into the general fund rather than a dedicated field maintenance fund. He said he has concerns about bathrooms, pool maintenance, and equipment, and gave examples including broken wells, clogged sewer lines, and discarded pool heaters. Mr. Rossi said he would be on a committee to evaluate these issues and propose solutions to ensure proper maintenance and protection of borough investments in recreational facilities.

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

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved to adjourn to an executive session to consider Personnel Matters 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 9:00pm.
