

BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE
Mayor & Borough Council Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2026

Mayor Canose called this meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom only due to inclement weather. Present were Council Members Al Ribeiro, Charlie Szrom, 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 4, 2025.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATIONS

Rippled Waters Engineering LLC, Dam Removal Concept Plan and Summary of the Environmental Assessment, Mary Paist-Goldman of Rippled Waters Engineering presented an overview of the borough's planned 2026 Green Acres application for park development funding and the concept plan tied to the dam removal project. She explained that the required preliminary work has been completed, including the public survey, conceptual design, environmental impact assessment, and cost estimate. The concept includes a loop walking trail around the former pond area, replacement of the existing pedestrian bridge, designated fishing access points with benches, educational signage, meadow and forest plantings, removal of two smaller downstream dams, in-stream habitat and grade-control features, and bank stabilization measures. She noted that parking would remain limited to the existing municipal building and park areas. She summarized the environmental assessment, stating that dam removal would eliminate the borough's dam safety liability, improve water quality and fish habitat, reduce geese presence, lower risk to nearby structures, and shift funds from dam compliance toward park maintenance. She said construction would follow strict safety, erosion, and access controls. The no-action alternative was deemed infeasible due to dam safety violations, and rehabilitation had previously been studied and rejected because it would retain long-term liability. The total project cost was estimated at approximately \$3.48 million, with about \$690,000 in Green Acres funding targeted for the recreational amenities and certain restoration elements. She reviewed survey feedback, addressing questions about parking, private fundraising, project cost, dredging versus removal, and why the dam cannot simply be opened. She also grouped public comments into concerns about geese, maintenance, lack of park amenities, and requests to keep the pond, explaining how the proposed project responds to each. Regarding rehabilitation as a cheaper alternative, she emphasized that the structure is a state-classified high-hazard dam, meaning failure could result in loss of life. As the owner, the borough is required to correct structural deficiencies and remain in compliance with current regulations. She stated that the removal project has been fully engineered, permitted, and eliminates the high-hazard classification, while a rehabilitation option would require a new multi-year feasibility and permitting process, full compliance with modern design standards, ongoing inspections, maintenance, emergency

planning, and continued long-term liability. She concluded that the project is a risk-reduction and public-safety initiative with a clear regulatory path forward.

Public Comment Period

Bob Graham, Dryden Road, disagreed with the presentation and stated that the cost to remove the dam had increased significantly from the amount originally discussed by the governing body. He said the current \$3.4 million estimate as excessive, saying that that it was far higher than a rehabilitation alternative, and suggested that advances in DEP remediation technology warranted a reassessment before proceeding. He said the project was addressing a largely hypothetical flood risk and did not provide sufficient value at the current price, and he questioned whether the hydrologic analysis should be revisited. He also said that the mobilization costs in the estimate were unreasonably high and noted that he had submitted supporting documentation. Mayor Canose and Mary Paist-Goldman clarified that the earlier, lower estimate did not include restoration of the park, bridges, and other amenities that were later added to the scope, and that the initial conceptual cost was approximately \$2.2 million rather than half of the current figure. Ms. Paist-Goldman said she is a qualified dam safety engineer with extensive experience in hydrologic and hydraulic modeling and noted that prior rehabilitation cost scenarios presented at earlier hearings were comparable to, or slightly higher than, the removal option for the spillway modifications evaluated.

Kerry Haselton, Mine Brook Road, thanked the Mary Paist-Goldman for her presentation and raised several questions about park conditions and project logistics. She asked whether the plan would address the persistent drainage issues on the railroad side of the park so that a trail could be usable, and whether invasive knotweed throughout the site—including downstream of the dam—would be removed with a long-term maintenance strategy. She also suggested installing bike racks to offset limited parking, requested the anticipated construction schedule, and asked how the local share of the project would be financed. Ms. Paist-Goldman responded that the drainage problems and downstream stabilization are included in the dam removal scope, along with removal and remediation of knotweed, with maintenance guidance to be provided to the borough. She said bike racks are not currently in the design but could be added as an amenity. She outlined multiple funding sources, including secured and pending grants, and noted that federal funding previously expected is no longer available. The anticipated construction window is early fall during low stream flow. In response to the funding question, Ms. Malool said that bonding authority of approximately \$3.1 million is already in place to cover the project, with any grant awards reducing the borough's final cost.

Mike Gallaway, Wesley Avenue, stated that the park has historically seen little use in its current condition but expressed concern that the proposed improvements would attract visitors without providing adequate parking. He said this could lead to inappropriate parking at the firehouse, police department, and public works areas, potentially interfering with first responder operations, and said a parking plan should be addressed as part of the project. Mary Paist-Goldman said she acknowledged the concern and indicated that additional signage and further discussion with the borough regarding parking and long-term solutions would be considered.

Council Comments

Mr. Traynor stated that while he shared Bob Graham's concern about the high cost and believed the project was largely driven by updated DEP regulations, he ultimately supported moving forward with dam removal. Based on the information provided by the borough's professionals, his own research, and his experience with the DEP approval process, he felt rehabilitation was unlikely to be a less expensive or more feasible option. He added that removal would create a usable park, improve eligibility for grant funding, and could open opportunities for private fundraising through naming rights and other donations.

Mr. Szrom agreed with Mr. Traynor, noting that although the increased cost was frustrating, much of it was tied to regulatory requirements and the proper handling and disposal of potentially contaminated materials, which limited the ability to seek lower-cost bids. He said removal appeared to be the most economical long-term solution, would reduce future maintenance obligations, provide environmental benefits, and create a community amenity. He supported exploring additional parking, pursuing grants, and encouraging private donations.

Mr. Ribeiro agreed with the prior council members' comments and asked Ms. Paist-Goldman to restate for the public the regulatory timeline and the borough's obligations. Ms. Paist-Goldman explained that dam safety officials required action in 2019, that the borough formally selected removal in 2022, and that the state issued a permit in 2025 with a one-year deadline to advance to construction because of the dam's structural deficiencies. She advised that changing to rehabilitation would restart the multi-year permitting process and could expose the borough to daily fines. She also noted that the next step is preparation of bid documents and that the engineering team will seek cost reductions, including potential beneficial reuse of excavated material to reduce hauling and disposal expenses.

A resolution will be considered later in the meeting to authorize applying for the grant.

2025 Library Year in Review, Fran Daley, Library Director, provided an update on the Library's operations and recent renovation. She said that 2025 included a full interior renovation of the 17,000-square-foot facility and a transition to a new Koha library system, both completed while maintaining programming through temporary service locations. Despite construction-related disruptions, library visits increased 9.2% year-over-year, with program attendance up 10.5%. Approximately 5,000 people hold library cards, and overall circulation remains strong. Since reopening in September, usage has continued to grow, supported by expanded evening hours and reconfigured spaces, including a dedicated children's area, flexible meeting rooms, and enhanced quiet and collaborative work areas. The Library now hosts approximately 900 programs annually and has revised meeting room policies to prioritize local residents and organizations. Ms. Daley acknowledged the support of the Board, staff, volunteers, and community members. Mr. Ribeiro inquired about the proportion of library events hosted by outside organizations and whether expanding regional use represented an opportunity for growth. He referenced attendance at a countywide law enforcement recognition event held at the library as an example. Ms. Daley said that demand for use of the community room increased significantly last summer and fall, prompting a revision of the library's meeting room policy. Due to the volume of requests and expanded room availability following renovations, the policy was updated to prioritize Bernardsville residents, Bernardsville-based nonprofit organizations,

and Library co-sponsored programs. The changes were implemented to prevent displacement of local use and ensure availability for Borough groups. Council expressed appreciation for the Library's continued growth and successful completion of the renovation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Zamarra moved to approve the minutes of January 5, 2026, January 20, 2026, and January 26, 2026. Mr. Ribeiro seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public.

Bob Graham, Dryden Road, said that the Library should be recognized as a key component of the Borough's emergency preparedness planning. He also urged the Council to carefully review the bedroom mix within the Claris proposal, suggesting that reducing the number of three-bedroom units could help mitigate density concerns and better align the project with zoning objectives.

Mike Gallaway, Church Street, said he opposes the proposed 96-unit, four-story affordable housing development at the Clarus site. He raised concerns about traffic congestion, school-related circulation, neighborhood character, infrastructure capacity, and overall scale. He suggested exploring alternative sites, including the post office property and the Wells Fargo building, and questioned the necessity of accommodating the proposed density. In response, the Mayor, Council, and Mr. Pidgeon explained the Borough's state-mandated affordable housing obligations, the March 15 deadline under the 2024 Fair Housing Act amendments, and the risk of losing immunity from builder's remedy litigation if a compliant plan is not adopted. It was emphasized that the overlay does not constitute final project approval and that any development would undergo significant review and mitigation through redevelopment planning and Planning Board oversight.

Maureen Stevens, Woodland Road, agreed with Mr. Gallaway's concerns regarding infrastructure, traffic, sewer capacity, and architectural consistency. She encouraged the Borough to challenge the state mandate and advocated for stronger design standards reflective of the community's colonial character. The Mayor, Council, and Mr. Pidgeon responded that courts have consistently upheld Mount Laurel obligations and that municipalities that fail to comply risk court-ordered remedies, including expanded development rights.

Kathy Peachey, Chilton Street, expressed frustration with building heights exceeding recently adopted three-story zoning standards and requested more balanced public information regarding Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements. She also emphasized preserving neighborhood access and maintaining community character.

Shannon Calvert, Sunset Drive, raised concerns about concentrating density in a single location, public safety impacts near the schools and Library, and the perception that other underutilized properties could be considered instead. It was noted that multiple sites are included in the

Borough's plan, including prior round projects and a proposed senior affordable component behind Walgreens.

Kerry Haselton, Mine Brook Road, inquired about revisions to the Church Street map and the inclusion of the Library driveway. It was clarified that the driveway remains Borough property and that the developer would be required to add public parking and create a pocket park as part of the project, but no Borough land would be transferred.

Chris Schenk, Old Army Road, voiced support for meeting affordable housing obligations while expressing concern regarding scale, infrastructure limitations, and the need for transparency and continued public engagement. He encouraged council to pursue the most balanced outcome possible for the community.

Bob Graham, Dryden Road, suggested exploring whether the proposed building footprint could extend over the Library driveway from Church Street, potentially allowing the structure to spread out horizontally and reduce overall height to three stories. He characterized the idea as a conceptual option to balance developer needs with community concerns regarding scale.

Kerry Haselton, Mine Brook Road, supported the concept and questioned whether any Borough-owned land within the building envelope could create leverage or financial benefit for the municipality. She also reflected on the prior Palmer redevelopment, expressing disappointment that no public open space was ultimately incorporated despite earlier expectations. It was noted that Palmer contributed \$1.5 million to the Borough's affordable housing trust fund, which supports other projects, and noted privacy considerations related to publicly accessible courtyards in residential developments.

Shannon Calvert and Chris Schenk, reiterated concerns about traffic congestion, school impacts, infrastructure capacity, and long-term downtown vitality. Questions were raised regarding whether sufficient forward-looking traffic and infrastructure studies would be conducted prior to approvals. The Mayor, Council, and Mr. Pidgeon confirmed that formal traffic, parking, and engineering studies are required as part of any application and that the New Jersey Department of Transportation controls certain state highway improvements. They encouraged residents to engage state legislators directly, noting ongoing advocacy through the League of Municipalities. They emphasized that the Borough has pursued bonus credits and strategic planning measures that reduced its fourth-round obligation from 113 units to 73 units, thereby limiting overall exposure.

Mike Gallaway, Church Street, questioned why the Borough could not pursue smaller developments with fewer total units. It was explained that state law requires a 20% affordable set-aside for developments over five units and that reducing density at one site would require identifying equivalent units elsewhere. It was noted that court-approved site numbers, including the 93-unit figure associated with the fourth-round plan, are now vested through judicial approval and mediation. Failure to comply with deadlines would result in loss of immunity and potential builder's remedy litigation, allowing substantially less local control. Discussion took place about the financial realities of constructing municipally sponsored affordable housing. Round Three projects benefited from Borough-owned land contributions, whereas acquiring and

developing new sites independently would significantly increase municipal debt and taxpayer burden.

Kathy Peachey, Chilton Street, inquired about blasting costs at a prior affordable housing site and suggested alternative infrastructure approaches, including on-site sewer systems. Mayor Canose clarified that blasting ultimately reduced overall project costs and that state housing policy prioritizes proximity to transportation infrastructure, limiting the viability of more remote sites.

Ms. Zamarra said she wanted to state some facts. She said that the moderate-income housing level corresponds to an annual salary of approximately \$85,000 for a single person, emphasizing that it is not extremely low income. She said that property owners have full discretion over whom they sell their properties to, limiting the Borough's control in certain development matters. She stated the importance of adhering to professional standards in urban planning, traffic, and housing, noting that proposed densities of 48 units per acre fall within responsible development guidelines. She said there is a need to balance downtown development with the town's large open-space parcels elsewhere, ensuring responsible growth across the Borough. She said that, contrary to some perceptions, there are residents who support the proposed development, which she believes would add vibrancy to downtown.

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

ORDINANCES (Public Hearing)

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2026-2036, **CONCERNING SEWER CONNECTION FEES AND SEWER USER RATES AND ALLOCATION AND AMENDING CHAPTER XVI OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "SEWER REGULATIONS"**. Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. Traynor moved to pass Ordinance #2026-2036 on final reading and adopt as published. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Mr. Ribeiro, Mr. Szrom, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamarra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2026-2037, **AN ORDINANCE REMOVING KENNEL FEES FROM THE BOROUGH CODE SO THAT THEY CAN BE SET BY RESOLUTION AND AMENDING CHAPTER 5 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "ANIMAL CONTROL"**. Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. Zazzarino moved to pass Ordinance #2026-2037 on final reading and adopt as published. Mr. Ribeiro seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Mr. Ribeiro, Mr. Szrom, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamarra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2026-2038, **CONCERNING COUNCIL MEETING PROCEDURES AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING CHAPTER 2 OF THE BOROUGH CODE ENTITLED "ADMINISTRATION"**. Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. Ribeiro moved to pass Ordinance #2026-2038 on final reading and adopt as published. Mr. Szrom seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Mr. Ribeiro, Mr. Szrom, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamarra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

Mayor Canose opened the public hearing on Ordinance #2026-2039, **CALENDAR YEAR 2026, ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)**". Hearing no comments, Mayor Canose closed the public hearing. Mr. Szrom moved to pass Ordinance #2026-2039 on final reading and adopt as published. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Mr. Ribeiro, Mr. Szrom, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamarra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

Mr. Ribeiro moved to carry the public hearing on Ordinance #2026-2040, **AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING AFFORDABLE HOUSING SET-ASIDES AND AMENDING ARTICLE 13 OF THE BOROUGH LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ENTITLED "AFFORDABLE HOUSING"**, to a special meeting on March 9, 2026 at 7:00pm on Zoom only, with no further notice. Mr. Szrom seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

Mr. Traynor suggested an amendment to amended Ordinance #2026-2041, **AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING ZONING REGULATIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE BOROUGH'S FOURTH ROUND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER AND SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE BOROUGH LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE**, to clarify the pre development grade elevation to the Clarus site. Mr. Szrom moved to approved the amendment and carry the public hearing on Ordinance #2026-2041 as amended to a special meeting on March 9, 2026 at 7:00pm on Zoom only. Mr. Zazzarino seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

ORDINANCES (Introduction)

Mr. Szrom moved that Ordinance #2026-2042, **SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING SECTION 12-1.2 OF THE BOROUGH CODE BY ADDING AN EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR A CONTINUED CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY RELATED TO THE EXTENSION OF AFFORDABILITY CONTROLS UNDER THE BOROUGH'S FOURTH ROUND HOUSING ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN**, 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, March 23, 2026. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

Mr. Traynor moved that Ordinance #2026-2043, **AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING CHAPTER LD-13, "AFFORDABLE HOUSING," INCLUDING LD-13-19 "DEVELOPMENT FEES," OF THE BOROUGH LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, AND ADOPTING UPDATED AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT FEE REGULATIONS BASED ON THE MODEL DCA ORDINANCE** be introduced by title, passed on first reading, published according to law, and that a public hearing be scheduled for a special meeting on March 9, 2026 at 7:00pm on Zoom only. Ms. Zamarra seconded and the motion was approved with five yes votes.

RESOLUTIONS

- #26-47 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS (As of 2/4/26)**
- #26-48 AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS (As of 2/18/26)**
- #26-49 APPROVING PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSFER OF A.B.C. LICENSE #1803-44-005-007**
- #26-50 SETTING 2026 POOL RATES**
- #26-51 ADOPTING THE FOURTH ROUND AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPENDING PLAN AND THE FOURTH ROUND AFFIRMATIVE MARKETING PLAN, AND DIRECTING IMPLEMENTATION CONSISTENT WITH THE MEDIATION AGREEMENT WITH FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER AND THE COURT ORDER APPROVING SETTLEMENT**
- #26-52 IMPLEMENTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE MEDIATION AGREEMENT WITH FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER AND THE COURT'S ORDER APPROVING SETTLEMENT; ADOPTING PLAN FOR CONTINUING CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY AND REPAIRS FOR EXTENDED UNITS; DIRECTING COST AND REHABILITATION ANALYSIS, FUNDING, AND MANUAL PREPARATION AND STATING INTENT TO FUND**
- #26-53 ENDORSING THE HOUSING ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN ADOPTED BY THE BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD ON FEBRUARY 11, 2026**
- #26-54 AUTHORIZING RIPPLED WATERS ENGINEERING LLC TO APPLY FOR A GRANT FOR DAM REMOVAL**
- #26-55 APPOINTING JUSTIN CARLUCCI AS A PROBATIONARY POLICE OFFICER**
- #26-56 APPOINTING VIRGINIA CHIESA TO THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO FILL UNEXPIRED TERM OF AMY DEMILT TO 12/31/30**
- #26-57 APPOINTING JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FIRE COMPANY**
- #26-58 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR & CLERK TO SIGN A QUALIFIED PRIVATE COMMUNITY SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH SOMERSET HILLS VILLAGE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION**

- #26-59 AUTHORIZING CANCELATION AND REFUND OF PROPERTY TAXES FOR 100% DISABLED VETERAN, 25 HIGHVIEW AVENUE**
- #26-60 ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION OF SAMANTHA D'ANTUONO AS FULL TIME POLICE DISPATCHER AND CHANGING HER STATUS TO PART TIME POLICE DISPATCHER**
- #26-61 ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION OF BILL ROBERTS, ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**
- #26-62 APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF CARYN NERI TO PLANNING & ZONING ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR**
- #26-63 AUTHORIZATION OF TAX REFUND**
- #26-64 AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT FOR MEETING ROOM TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS**
- #26-65 ACCEPTING A REIMBURSEMENT GRANT FOR LEAF COMPOSTING 2025**
- #26-66 DESIGNATING FIELD TREATMENTS IN 2026**
- #26-67 ACCEPTING THE RESIGNATION OF JACK BERTHA, DRIVER/LABORER**
- #26-68 APPOINTING LINDSAY HOFFMAN AS A FULL TIME DISPATCHER**
- #26-69 APPROVING ITEMS OF DISCUSSION FROM THE FEBRUARY 17, 2026 COUNCIL MEETING**
- #26-70 APPROVING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY APPROPRIATIONS**

Mr. Ribeiro moved to pass Resolutions #26-47 through #26-70, except #26-49, #26-51, #26-52, and #26-53. Regarding Resolutions #26-51, #26-52, and #26-53, Mr. Pidgeon said these resolutions will be moved to the March 9th special meeting. Mr. Traynor seconded and the motion was approved with the following roll call vote: Mr. Ribeiro, Mr. Szrom, Mr. Traynor, Ms. Zamarra, and Mr. Zazzarino voted yes.

REPORTS

Mayor's Update, Mayor Canose gave her update including the following items:

- Attended a Regionalization Advisory Committee meeting; the school district is studying potential regionalization with Bedminster, currently tuition-based, with further research

planned.

- Participated in a Civic Plus software demonstration for improved public communication; one more demonstration is scheduled before a decision is made.
- Attended the State of the County Breakfast hosted by the Somerset County Business Partnership, with updates from county officials.
- Met with Steve Katz, Somerset County Food Bank, they are exploring options for addressing food insecurity locally; discussed expanding programs like the Bedwell backpack initiative.
- Interviewed by a student from Leadership Somerset, a county program focused on civic engagement and government education.
- Served on a mayoral panel for business owners at the Park Avenue Club discussing engagement with the business community alongside mayors from Dunellen, Chatham, and Watchung.
- Participated in a Somerset Hills Safety Committee meeting: discussed snow removal ordinances, potential collaboration on “Coffee with a Cop,” and shared community safety events, such as National Night Out. Peapack has a 5-ton U.S. Army deepwater rescue vehicle for potential municipal use if needed.
- Attended a shared municipal court meeting; the Borough is expected to receive approximately \$6,000 in return, with favorable projections for the next year.
- A mini-golf family activity was held this Saturday at the Library and was well received
- Plans to revive the Outstanding Community Volunteers program as part of the 250th celebration, with a nomination process forthcoming.

Administrator’s Report, Ms. Malool reported on the following items:

- the Department of Public Works (DPW) worked nearly 24 hours straight to clear roads, salt streets, and ensure accessibility. A few trees and wires remain down, but all roads are open. Spot clearing will continue throughout the week.
- the previous storm required two nights of DPW overtime to clear downtown sidewalks, costing approximately \$5,000 per night and exceeding the overtime budget. Funds were supplemented from the Storm Trust. Discussion focused on whether to repeat downtown clearing for upcoming storms. Council consent was to proceed with prioritizing parking areas rather than sidewalks, preferably early in the morning rather than overnight.
- the New Jersey American Water project at the train station experienced a minor delay due to drilling issues. DPW cleared what they could, and coordination with the contractor is expected to continue for full completion.
- Council thanked DPW, fire, EMS, and police for their work under challenging conditions, including recent snowstorms.
- Recognition was given to OEM Director Tim Richard for exceptional coordination during the state of emergency.
- Mr. Traynor attended county incident management training, reinforcing the importance of leaving emergency response to trained professionals.

MONTHLY REPORTS

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 Somerset County OEM, 2025 Municipal OEM Evaluation for Compliance with NJ Statutes, Mayor Canose noted a letter received from Somerset County OEM noting that OEM Coordinator Tim Richard exceeded state OEM standards.

Unfinished Business - None

New Business - None

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Canose opened the meeting to the public. Hearing no comments from the public, Mayor Canose closed the open session.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved to adjourn to an executive session to consider Pending Litigation 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 10:15pm.
