



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL MINUTES • WORKSHOP

Clement V. Sommers Municipal Building
910 Oceanport Way, Oceanport, NJ 07757

APRIL 17, 2025 at 7:00 PM

1. **Meeting Called to Order:** Mayor Tvrdik called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM
2. **Statement of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act:** This meeting complies with the Open Public Meetings Act by adequate and electronic notification on January 12, 2025 of this meeting and its location, date and time to the Asbury Park Press and Two River Times and by the posting of same on the municipal bulletin board and Borough's Web Site.
3. **Flag Salute, Statement to the Public:** Mayor Tvrdik led attendees and members of the Council in the flag salute.

4. **Roll Call:**

STATUS	NAME, TITLE	ARRIVED
PRESENT:	Councilman Richard Gallo Councilman Bryan Keeshen Mayor Thomas Tvrdik Councilwoman Patricia Cooper Councilman William Deerin	
ABSENT:	Councilman Michael O'Brien, Keith Salnick	

ALSO PRESENT: Stephanie Kramer, Deputy Borough Clerk
Andrew Bayer, Borough Attorney
Donna M. Phelps, Administrator
Catherine D. LaPorta, Chief Financial Officer

5. **Public Comment - Action Items Only:** At this time, comments are invited on action items only. Upon being recognized by the Mayor, anyone wishing to address the Governing Body, please state your name and address. No member of the public may address or question individual Governing Body members or administration. Although public participation is welcomed and encouraged, the governing body may, through the Mayor or presiding officer, terminate remarks to and/or by any individual not keeping with the conduct of a proper and efficient meeting. The Borough bears no responsibility for comments made by members of the public. In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of public comment, questions from the public will be responded to, if feasible, after the public comment portion of the meeting is closed.

Mayor Tvrdik opened the meeting for public comment on action items only. A resident identified as Gary LaBruno of 50 Wyandotte Drive, raised two questions. His first question concerned New Jersey

American Water and the borough's noise ordinance. He inquired whether roadwork related to the water company would involve repaving every street in Oceanport. Mayor Tvrdek confirmed that all roads are scheduled to be repaved, with the exception of a small section at the north end of Algonquin. Gary's second question pertained to the potential hiring of a second Deputy Clerk. Mayor Tvrdek explained that the Borough Clerk is expected to take an unpaid leave of absence, leaving only a part-time staff member and Stephanie in the office. Due to the volume of OPRA requests, Kim Parent has been overwhelmed, and the Borough Administrator has even experienced stress-related health issues. The Mayor noted that Donna has been assisting the Clerk's office in addition to her regular duties to help manage the workload. Mayor Tvrdek then returned to the topic of New Jersey American Water and informed the public that all residents on the peninsula will be receiving postcards. He explained that the company will be installing new pipelines at their own cost, and that the materials being used will be the only ones present in the area at the time of use. Gary also asked whether the sewer company would be permitted to access the newly paved streets. Mayor Tvrdek assured him that the sewer company is not allowed to disturb the newly paved roads, and that the matter has been addressed. There were no further public comments. Mayor Tvrdek requested a motion to close the public comment portion of the meeting.

6. **Administrator's Report:** Borough Administrator Donna Phelps stated that The Borough has received the 2022 Tonnage Grant in the amount of \$8,337.76. The 2024 Tonnage Grant application is due by April 30th, and she is currently working on that submission. All members of the Governing Body, with the exception of Councilman Salnick, have completed the 2024/2025 Elected Officials Seminar. As a result, the Borough will receive a credit in the amount of \$1,750 on this year's MEL/JIF Insurance Premium. She reminded the Council that Financial Disclosure Statements are due by April 30th. It is Phelps understanding that Kim Jungfer has sent all necessary filing instructions via email. Phelps said that in the fall, she attended a Recycling Symposium and spoke with representatives from Book Drop, a local book recycling program. Their initiative aims to reduce landfill waste by partnering with recycling centers, libraries, and waste facilities. Book Drop has expressed interest in providing the Borough with a book recycling bin to be located at Borough Hall. BA Phelps stated that the company would manage bin maintenance and pickups—utilizing capacity sensors to ensure timely collection—at no cost to the Borough. They will also provide monthly or quarterly weight reports, which could assist in qualifying for grant programs, rebates, and other sustainability-related funding opportunities. She is requesting feedback from the Governing Body on whether to proceed with this project. The Governing Body agreed that this was a good idea and have their approval to proceed. Donna shared that the Borough was contacted by a High School Junior and Oceanport resident participating in Clean Ocean Action's Student Environmental Advocacy and Leadership Program. The student is interested in implementing an Adopt-a-Drain program in the Borough. Materials were submitted by Adopt A Storm Drain, an organization that supports such programs. Phelps mentioned the estimated program costs range between \$1,340 and \$1,540 for the first year, with an annual renewal cost of approximately \$540. BA Phelps added that they have reached out to both the student and Clean Ocean Action to obtain additional information, as there are some concerns that need to be addressed. The program would rely on residents to clean storm drains every two weeks. Since the drains are located in the roadway, safety measures—including proper visibility and equipment—would be essential. Additionally, Phelps continued that the Borough would likely be responsible for outreach and program administration, and we would need to evaluate the availability of resources to manage those responsibilities. She said she has discussed these concerns with OEM Superintendent Buzz, and he shares her reservations. A meeting with the student and Clean Ocean Action is being

scheduled, but at this time, it may not be feasible for the Borough to move forward with this initiative. There were no questions from the public.

7. **Clerk's Report:** Deputy Clerk Stephanie Kramer began by highlighting the increased workload in the Clerk's Office. She reported that Kim Parent had processed 155 OPRA requests. Additionally, the office has registered 228 dogs and 8 cats to date. Deputy Clerk Kramer noted a rise in the sale of boat permits and pickleball badges, attributing the increase to the warmer weather. She also reported an uptick in raffle license applications. Finally, she reminded everyone that the primary election is scheduled for June 10th. There were no questions from the public regarding her report.

8. **Consent Agenda:**

Resolution #2025-131 - Authorizing Payment of Bills:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Bill List 4-17-25:

Resolution #2025-132 - Approving 1st Aid Membership-Guzzi:

RESULT:	(4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Police Chief Approval Letter:

Resolution #2025-133 - Noise Exemption - NJ American Water:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

NJ American Water - Early Start:

Resolution #2025-134 - Noise Exemption - Fiore Paving:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper

SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Fiore Paving - Early Start:

Resolution #2025-135 - Awarding Contract to Galbraith & Son Excavation & Demolition:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Colliers Bid Award - Galbraith - FMERA Bldgs. 814,815,820,822,826,830:

Resolution #2025-136 - Authorizing Contract for Fertilization Services - Natural Green:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-137 - Awarding Non-Fair and Open Contract - Birds Beware:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-138 - Authorizing Competitive Contracting for a Turf Field Sports Consultant:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-139 - Authorizing the Appointment of Kathleen Cassidy as Deputy

Borough Clerk:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

9. First Reading Ordinances:

Ordinance #1106 - Amending Chapter 371 "Trees" Incorporating Stormwater Management Requirements: Councilwoman Cooper called for the introduction of Ordinance #1106 - Amending Chapter 371 "Trees" Incorporating Stormwater Management Requirements. Deputy Clerk Stephanie Kramer read the Ordinance in title only. She stated, The Borough of Oceanport County of Monmouth state of NJ amending chapter 371 trees incorporating the requirements of the boroughs NJ DEP tier one municipal storm water general permit. Councilwoman Cooper asked for a motion to approve the first reading and to hold the public hearing of the proposed ordinance at the meeting on May 1, 2025 and to advertise the same in accordance with the law. Councilman Keeshan motioned and Deerin seconded.

RESULT: Adopted (4 TO 0)

MOVER: Councilman Bryan Keeshen

SECONDER: Councilman William Deerin

AYES: Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

10. Second Reading & Public Hearing Ordinances:

Ordinance #1107 - Amending Chapter 284 "Peace and Good Order": Deputy Clerk Stephanie Kramer read the ordinance by title only and stated that notice of the ordinance was published in The Two River Times on April 10, 2025, in accordance with the law. Mayor Tvrdik noted that this was the second reading of the ordinance and opened the floor to the public for comment. There were no comments from the public, and this portion of the meeting was subsequently closed. A motion to adopt the ordinance was made by Councilwoman Cooper and seconded by Councilman Deerin.

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper

SECONDER:	Councilman William Deerin
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Ordinance #1108 - Amending Chapter 64 "Vehicles and Traffic":

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman William Deerin
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Deputy Clerk Stephanie Kramer read the ordinance by title only. She stated that the notice was published in the Two River Times on April 10, 2025, in accordance with the law. The Mayor opened it up to the public for comments. There were none. He asked for a motion to close this portion of the meeting.

11. Municipal Budget Introduction:

Introduction and First Reading : Prior to addressing Ordinance #1109, Mayor Tvrđik turned the floor over to Chief Financial Officer Katie LaPorta for a budget update. Ms. LaPorta reported that the Finance Committee has presented a proposed budget, which includes a 1.27% overall increase. She explained that residential property assessments have risen by approximately 9%, while the borough's net taxable valuation increased by 12%. Despite these increases, the municipal tax rate will decrease by 9.75%, resulting in an estimated average savings of \$48 for residential taxpayers. Ms. LaPorta also announced that a public hearing on the proposed budget will be held at the next council meeting on May 15th. The budget will be available for public review on the borough's website, and a hard copy will be accessible at Borough Hall.

Ordinance #1109 Establishing a COLA/CAP Bank for CY2025:

RESULT:	(4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman William Deerin
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Mayor Tvrđik thanked Katie LaPorta and addressed Ordinance #1109 - Establishing a COLA cap bank for calendar year, 2025. Deputy Clerk Kramer read the Ordinance by name and Councilwoman Cooper motioned to approve the first reading and hold a public hearing at the May 15th meeting and to advertise the same in accordance with the law. Councilman Deerin seconded the motion.

Introducing & Approving the 2025 Municipal Budget: Mayor Tvrđik continued with

Resolution #2025-140 - Introducing and Approving the 2025 Municipal Budget. CFO LaPorta announced that they had to substitute sheet 45, as the original budget did not include the change order from last year. The Mayor asked if everyone had it. They did. Borough Administrator Phelps announced that it is also posted on the website, so anyone looking at the budget now, is looking at the most current up-to-date budget.

Resolution #2025-140 - Introducing and Approving the 2025 Municipal Budget :

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

The Mayor asked for a motion on the first reading of this and Councilman Keeshen initiated and Councilwoman Cooper seconded. It was announced as a reminder that this is just an introduction of the budget and not an approval and if they had any questions to email someone at the finance committee.

2025 Budget:

Resolution #2025-141 - Authorizing Self-Examination of 2025 Municipal Budget:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman William Deerin
SECONDER:	Councilman Richard Gallo
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

12. Council Standing Committee Reports:

Councilman Deerin - Parks & Recreation: Councilman Deerin started by reminding everyone that the Spring Fest is coming up on April 26th and that it will have more than 50 vendors and that will include a farmer's market. He commented on how nice the parks look and that he is seeing more kids out in them. He asked everyone to be careful driving as the kids were on bikes and there seemed to be alot of them. Councilman Deerin brought up Blackberry Park and the renovations coming and Borough Administrator Phelps commented that as soon as the budget passes, they can move forward with that. Mayor Tvrdik inquired if the work would start in the summer or after the season, to which BA Phelps replied, she doesn't think the work will take that long, and it is state-contracted. Councilwoman Cooper asked Councilman Deerin if there was a rain date for the Spring Fest this weekend and there was, and it is on May 5th. The mayor stated that if it does rain it could compete with the other festivals happening, so they will keep an eye on it.

Councilman Gallo - Public Works & Engineering: Councilman Gallo stated he only had one topic to report, which was that this is the last month they will be taking the leaves, so if you have any in your yard, he advised residents to take them to the curb. The Mayor

commented that sticks and branches go in the trash for now. He mentioned that the Township engineer, Bill White, will be overseeing the water company doing the work in town and that they have a plan in place.

Councilman Keeshen - Public Safety: Councilman Keeshen asked that as spring approaches there are many kids out there and asked if drivers would slow down. He shared that he watches our law enforcement stopping people for excessive speed. He thanked Donna and Katie for the work they put in the budget as there was an extensive amount of emergency services for the budget planning. He shared that May 12 will be bingo night. Councilman Keeshen said that Councilman O' Brien asked to extend his thanks to Katie and Donna for getting the budget together. The Mayor mentioned that the Board of Ed meeting as been pushed to April 29th to they have time to go over the budget. He also stated that interviews were taking place to replace Mrs. Martinez for director of curriculum.

Councilman O'Brien - Finance & Administration: Absent

Councilman Salnick - Health & Human Services: Absent

Councilwoman Cooper - Planning & Development:

Council President Cooper provided an update on the Water Watch and Environmental Committees. She reported that Water Watch has resumed testing activities, and Fred Filliopone is playing a key role in getting the program back on track. The Environmental Committee has convened recently and welcomed two new members to the group.

Council President Cooper then delivered the Planning Board and Development Committee report. She informed the council that the Planning Board meeting originally scheduled for April 8th was canceled. The next meeting has been rescheduled for Wednesday, April 23rd, noting the change from the usual Tuesday schedule. Additionally, she announced that the Netflix-related meeting was also canceled, with the next session expected to take place in May.

In closing, Council President Cooper mentioned that a local Boy Scout is working toward earning a merit badge. She has spoken with his mother about the possibility of him attending a few committee meetings and participating in cleanup efforts.

13. Mayor Tvrdek's Report:

Mayor Tvrdek began his report by noting that the primary focus of his update had already been addressed during the earlier discussion regarding New Jersey American Water. He then extended his sincere thanks to all those involved in preparing the municipal budget, acknowledging their hard work and collaboration.

The Mayor expressed gratitude to the family who generously donated trees to enhance Old Wharf Park, stating that their contribution is making a meaningful impact on the community. He also commented on the recent plantings around the parking lot area, noting that the greenery will mature

beautifully in the coming seasons.

Mayor Tvrdik reported that the town received mulch for the garden beds from Mazza's, and that Builder's General supplied the materials for the construction of the individual beds. He commended Pat Joyce of Shoreview Landscaping for completing all the work on the community garden and recognized Michael Daly for donating the topsoil used in the project.

Turning to a resident's concern, Mayor Tvrdik shared that a request has been made to reconsider the town's position on backyard chickens. He remarked that perceptions around keeping chickens have evolved, and that some municipalities now permit them. He asked the council whether this was an issue they would like to revisit. Following discussion, three members expressed interest in reopening the topic for consideration at a future meeting.

Mayor Tvrdik concluded his report by extending warm wishes to all, wishing a Happy Passover and a Happy Easter before opening the floor to public comment.

14. Public Comments:

Gary LaBruno of 50 Wyandotte Avenue addressed the council with a concern regarding sump pumps discharging water into the street without proper approval from the town engineer. He specifically referenced the Harbor Point Condominium Complex, noting that he observed water on the street earlier that evening on his way to the meeting.

Mayor Tvrdik responded by stating that he would look into the matter and agreed that it makes little sense for water to be pumped into the street, especially when the proper discharge should be directed toward the waterway. The Mayor then invited Buzz, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director, to speak on the issue.

Buzz confirmed that Harbor Point is supposed to have a drainage system on their property that discharges directly to the river. He also noted that Bill White is aware of the situation and acknowledged that corrective action is needed.

Mayor Tvrdik assured Mr. LaBruno and those present that he would bring the matter to the attention of the Code Enforcement Officer and the Construction Official for further investigation and resolution.

With no additional public comments, Mayor Tvrdik called for a motion to close the meeting. Councilman Keeshen made the motion, which was seconded by Council President Cooper.

15. Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Smith
BOROUGH CLERK