



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL MINUTES • WORKSHOP

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

JUNE 5, 2025 at 7:00 PM

1. **Meeting Called to Order:**
2. **Statement of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act:**
3. **Flag Salute, Statement to the Public:**
4. **Roll Call:**

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

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

5. **Oath of Office Ceremony- Councilwoman Kara Manna :** Mayor Tvrdik invited Councilwoman Kara Manna's family up to the floor to support her in taking the Oath of Office. He then congratulated her.
6. **Eagle Scout Presentation- Kyle Nagy:**

Eagle Scout Kyle Nagy appeared before the Mayor and Council to present his proposed Eagle Scout project. Mr. Nagy distributed drawings and a written explanation of the project to the governing body. He explained that the purpose of the project is to enhance the appearance of the entrance and surrounding area of the community garden.

Mr. Nagy outlined his plans, which include cleaning and preparing the area, securing funding, and organizing work plans with the assistance of his troop. He estimated the total cost of the project to be approximately \$2,000. The scope of work will begin with leveling and grading the topsoil, laying down weed barriers, and additional beautification efforts.

Mayor Tvrdik suggested that Mr. Nagy consider recognizing the original community garden volunteers by including their names on the entrance sign. The Mayor also recommended that Mr. Nagy researches plants that are deer-resistant, noting the presence of deer in the area.

The Council members expressed their full support for the project, stating that it was a fantastic idea and that they look forward to seeing the completed improvements.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT - Action Items Only:** Mayor Tvrdik opened the meeting to the public for comments on action items only. There were no comments from the public. A motion to close the public comment portion of the meeting was made by Councilman Deerin and seconded by Councilwoman Cooper. The motion carried.

8. **Administrator's Report:**

Borough Administrator Phelps began by welcoming Councilwoman Manna and congratulating her on her appointment. Borough Administrator Phelps stated she looks forward to working with Councilwoman Manna and encouraged her to reach out at any time for assistance.

Borough Administrator Donna Phelps reported that an additional reimbursement was received from the County in the amount of \$90,871.91 for the Myrtle Avenue Road Project. This brings the total reimbursement received from the County to just under \$740,000.

Borough Administrator Phelps further reported that the Borough received the 2025 Clean Communities Grant in the amount of \$17,863.30.

Borough Administrator Donna Phelps noted that Tim Griffin submitted a grant application to New Jersey American Water for the purchase of two cameras for the Fire Department. The grant, in the amount of \$2,250, was awarded in late May. Borough Administrator Phelps thanked Tim for his efforts.

Borough Administrator Phelps concluded by providing an update on the State Health Benefits Program, stating that it continues to experience significant challenges. A recent report from the Treasury Department projected a 26% increase in rates for Plan Year 2026, with a cumulative increase of 60% over the next four years. While the Borough did experience a rate increase under the Central Jersey Health Insurance Fund (CJHIF), it was significantly lower than the projected increases under the State plan. CJHIF remains hopeful that rates will remain stable moving forward.

9. **Clerk's Report:**

Deputy Clerk Kramer reported that garbage and recycling notices were distributed to all residents during the month. The purpose of the notice was to remind residents of the updated pickup schedule.

She noted that both pickleball and boat ramp sales had increased, which she attributed to the recent

holiday weekend.

Deputy Clerk Kramer informed the governing body that the County Clerk's Office has announced early voting for the Primary Election will take place from Tuesday, June 3rd through Sunday, June 8th. She also shared the designated hours for early voting.

Additionally, Deputy Clerk Kramer reminded residents that the Monmouth Park Borough box remains available for use at no cost and encouraged those interested in reserving it to contact the Clerk's Office.

There were no questions or comments from the governing body.

10. **Consent Agenda:** Mayor Tvrdik asked the Council if there were any items that needed to be considered separately. There were none. A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Councilman O'Brien and seconded by Councilwoman Cooper. The motion carried.

Resolution #2025-156 - Payment of Bills:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-157 - Authorizing Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-158 - Awarding a Contract to the Borja Group:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-159 - Granting a Waiver and Authorizing a Street Opening Permit

:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-160 - Appointing Anthony Montagna as Temporary Building Inspector

:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-161 - Requesting Approval for Amending the 2025 Municipal Budget For Clean Communities Funding:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-162 - Appointing Sharon O'Conner as Violations Clerk:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-163 - Authorizing Redemption of Tax Sale Cert #24-00008

:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien

SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-164 - Authorizing Redemption of Tax Sale Cert. #24-00012

:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-165 - Authorizing Preliminary Investigation of Mega Parcel to Determine if it Meets Housing and Redevelopment Criteria:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-166 - Authorizing Submittal of a Grant Application and Execution of a Grant Contract with NJ Department of Transportation:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

Resolution #2025-167 - Authorizing Bid Opportunity to be Advertised for Purchase of a Police Vehicle

:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna

NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

11. First Reading Ordinances:

Councilwoman Cooper introduced Ordinance #1111, entitled "An Ordinance Authorizing the Borough to Purchase Block 66, Lot 7.01 and Block 66, Lot 9.01 for Open Space Preservation Purposes." Clerk Kramer read the title of the Ordinance into the record.

Councilwoman Cooper made a motion to approve Ordinance #1111 on first reading, to schedule a public hearing for the next regularly scheduled Council meeting, and to advertise the Ordinance in accordance with the law. The motion was seconded by Councilman Keeshen. The motion carried.

Ordinance #1111 Authorizing the Borough to Purchase Block 66, Lot 7.01 and Block 66, Lot 9.01 for Open Space Reservation Purposes

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

12. Meeting Minutes:

6-5-24 Mayor and Council Workshop Minutes:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
SECONDER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

9-5-24 Mayor and Council Workshop Minutes:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman William Deerin
SECONDER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

10-17-24 Mayor and Council Regular Minutes with Resolutions:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (3 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

11-7-24 Mayor and Council Workshop Minutes:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (3 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman William Deerin
SECONDER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
AYES:	Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

11-7-24 Mayor and Council Regular Minutes:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (3 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
SECONDER:	Councilman William Deerin
AYES:	Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

12-5-24 Mayor and Council Workshop Minutes:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman William Deerin
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

12-17-24 Mayor and Council Regular Minutes:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (4 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

13. Discussion Item:

Amending Chapter 127 (Animals) and Chapter 390 (Zoning) for the Keeping of Poultry or Fowl:

Mayor Tvrdik stated that the Oceanport Code does not currently allow chickens. In light of rising poultry and egg prices, and following a resident inquiry regarding a possible code change to permit chickens, he felt it was worth having a discussion on the matter.

Councilman O'Brien stated that he had not given the topic much thought but was open to hearing arguments from both sides. He acknowledged the potential benefits of keeping chickens but wanted to be fully informed before forming an opinion.

Councilwoman Manna commented that she was generally in favor but would also like to hear perspectives from both sides. Councilwoman Cooper expressed a similar sentiment, noting her interest in learning more about both the pros and cons. Councilman Deerin stated that he did not see a compelling reason to change the existing code.

Mayor Tvrdik reiterated that he does not have a vote on the matter but shared that he is personally opposed to allowing chickens. He advised the Council that if there was interest in moving forward with a potential change, including adding specific conditions or restrictions, the discussion could be continued. He then opened the floor for public comment.

Roseanne Letson of 50 Deer Path Court, Tinton Falls, addressed the Council. She noted that Oceanport had considered this topic over 10 years ago and that she had conducted significant research at that time due to her strong opposition. Ms. Letson shared details about raising chickens and recounted a negative experience involving a neighbor who kept chickens on Branch Avenue. She expressed concern that allowing chickens might not be well-received by all residents.

Following public comment, the Council discussed maintaining the current code as is, especially in light of the fact that the resident who initially raised the issue was not present to speak. Mayor Tvrdik concluded the discussion by suggesting that the Borough could look into how neighboring municipalities are handling the issue for future consideration.

14. Mayor Tvrdik's Report:

Mayor Tvrdik congratulated Councilwoman Manna and stated that he looks forward to working with her. He reminded residents that recycling collection is now every Wednesday, as noted in the Clerk's report.

The Mayor commented that the Memorial Day Parade was a great success with a strong turnout. He noted the importance of honoring those who lost their lives in service to the country and expressed appreciation for the community's participation.

Mayor Tvrdik reported that 180 units are under construction behind the Riverwalk. Renovations have received certificates of occupancy, with only approximately 30 units remaining to be finalized. He thanked and congratulated the Building Department for their efficiency and timely work. He also

welcomed the new residents and investors to the community.

The Mayor announced that Bingo will be held on Saturday night at the First Aid building, with doors opening at 6:00 p.m.

He stated that targeted enforcement zones have been effective, resulting in over 100 court dockets, with approximately 70–80 related to motor vehicle violations.

Mayor Tvrdik reminded everyone that Flag Day will be observed on Saturday, June 14. The ceremony will take place at the flagpole in Blackberry Bay Park at 10:00 a.m., during which he will deliver a dedication to Ward Coles.

15. **Public Comments:** Roseann Letson of 50 Deer Path Court in Tinton Falls reminded everyone that the 63rd Army Band Concert for free is on July 2, at 6pm at Blackberry Bay and to bring your own chairs. She stated that September 11, 2025, will be the special speaker presentation at 7pm at the Old Wharf House. The Mayor commented that the band would be playing at Old Wharf Park at 7pm that Thursday and asked if we could move the meeting up to 6pm. The council agreed. Chief Grimes was asked to come up to the mic by the Mayor to speak about any feedback with the enforcement stops. Chief Grimes stated that most individuals took it with stride, and he believes it will be a one-and-done type of situation. He then mentioned that Friday the 13th is the makeup date for the softball game between the fire department and the police. There were no more comments and this section of the meeting was closed with Councilman O'Brien making the motion and Councilwoman Cooper seconded.

16. **Adjourn to Executive Session:**

**Resolution #2025-168 - Resolution Authorizing an Executive Session, June 5, 2025-
Matters Relating to Litigation, Negotiations and the Attorney-Client Privilege-
Affordable :**

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
SECONDER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

17. **Return from Executive Session:**

RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
SECONDER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
AYES:	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None

ABSTAIN: None

18. Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Smith
BOROUGH CLERK