



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL MINUTES • WORKSHOP

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

JULY 17, 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 Richard Gallo Councilman Bryan Keeshen Councilman Michael O'Brien Councilwoman Patricia Cooper Councilman William Deerin Councilwomen Kara Manna Mayor Thomas Tvrdik	7:10pm
ABSENT:		

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

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT - Action Items Only:** Mayor Tvrdik asked if there were any comments from the public regarding the Action Items on the agenda. Hearing none, a motion to close the Action Item comment portion was made by Councilman Deerin and seconded by Councilman Keeshen.
6. **Action Items:**

Mayor Tvrdik asked if there was a motion to approve the resolution Accepting the Resignation of Jeanne Smith. Councilman Keeshen made the motion, which was seconded by Councilman Deerin.

Before the vote, the Mayor opened the floor for any questions or comments regarding the resolution. He shared a heartfelt tribute to Jeanne Smith, describing her as both a colleague and a friend, having interacted with her over the years as a business owner, resident, and public official. He remarked that among the many employees he had worked with, Jeanne stood out for her consistently friendly demeanor and dedication to the Borough. Mayor Tvrdik recalled his early days serving as an

alternate on the Planning Board, noting that Jeanne was always there to help guide him. He recognized her for the many roles she held, including Planning Board Secretary and Borough Clerk, and for her exceptional leadership and service through events such as Superstorm Sandy, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the daily operations of the Borough over her 18-plus years of public service.

Councilman Deerin added that Jeanne was instrumental in his growth as a public official. He acknowledged that while he is not one to focus heavily on rules and regulations, he expressed sincere gratitude for her support and guidance, wishing her the very best in her next chapter.

Councilwoman Cooper echoed the sentiments shared, stating that she has known Jeanne for many years and expressed appreciation for her dedicated service to the Borough. She also extended her best wishes.

A roll call vote was then taken.

Mayor Tvrdik asked for a motion to approve the appointment of Stephanie Kramer as Acting Clerk. Councilman Deerin made the motion, which was seconded by Councilman Keeshen.

The Mayor then opened the floor for any comments or questions regarding the appointment. Hearing none, he congratulated Ms. Kramer and commended her strong work ethic and dedication to the Borough, noting her excellent performance while working alongside Jeanne Smith and other staff. He extended his best wishes as she assumes the new role.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Resolution #2025-192 - Accepting the Resignation of Jeanne Smith:

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

Resolution #2025-193 - Appointing Stephanie Kramer as Acting Borough Clerk

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RESULT:	ADOPTED (5 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilman William Deerin
SECONDER:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna

NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

7. **Oath of Office Ceremony - Acting Clerk Stephanie Kramer:** Stephanie Kramer took her Oath of Office and was sworn in.

8. **Administrator's Report:**

Borough Administrator Donna Phelps began her report by recognizing Jeanne for her dedicated service to the Governing Body and the residents of the Borough, expressing sincere appreciation for her commitment to public service and extending best wishes for the future. She then congratulated Stephanie on her appointment as Borough Clerk, commending her outstanding work in maintaining the continuity and efficiency of the Clerk's Office and noting that the promotion was well-deserved. She also expressed her appreciation for the continued teamwork with Stephanie, both Kims, and the newest addition to the staff, Katie. Administrator Phelps reported that the Final Report for the 2024 American Rescue Plan Firefighters Grant has been submitted; the Borough was awarded \$65,000 through the RFP submitted on December 4, 2023, which funded the acquisition of a Breathing Air Fill Station and Turnout Gear. All equipment has been received, and reimbursement documentation has been filed. She went on to thank Stephanie, Bill White, and the Planning Board for their efforts in organizing the public hearing required for the 2025 Monmouth County Open Space Grant, held on July 8. Katie was commended for completing the draft meeting minutes by noon the following day. The grant application for improvements to Blackberry Bay Park was submitted on July 9, ahead of the deadline, with a total project cost estimated at \$775,000 and a funding request of \$500,000. The Borough remains hopeful of a favorable outcome. Regarding the Jake's Law Playground project, she reported that the final three documents requested by Green Acres were submitted earlier in the day, and upon confirmation that the application is complete, vendors will be notified to initiate construction. She also noted that the Borough has received payment from New Jersey American Water Company for two grants awarded to the Fire Department, and a resolution to amend the budget to include these funds appears in the evening's agenda. Administrator Phelps informed the Council that New Jersey Natural Gas has submitted a petition to the Board of Public Utilities seeking an increase to its Basic Gas Supply Service and the Conservation Incentive Program. If approved, the proposed changes would result in an approximate \$8.98 per month (or 5%) increase for a customer using 100 therms. Virtual public hearings are scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, at 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., and residents interested in participating may contact her office for access details. Lastly, she acknowledged the success of the most recent Music in the Park event, which took place despite earlier concerns about the weather. The Soulstirs were a crowd favorite, and the evening was marked by enthusiastic community participation. She extended thanks to Kelle Burrough, Councilman Deerin, and the Recreation Committee for organizing the well-received event. Administrator Phelps concluded her report and welcomed any questions from the Mayor and Council.

9. **Clerk's Report:** Acting Clerk Kramer first thanked the Mayor and Council for their vote of confidence and support during the transition from Deputy Clerk. She commented on how the Borough Administrator has been working extra hours with training and Katie, Val and Jason in the financial

department have been helping too. Acting Clerk Kramer thanked Kim Parent and Kim Jungfer for stepping in and helping as well. Acting Clerk Kramer reported that the latest edition of the Borough Bulletin has been published. The issue includes updated information on community events, public safety announcements, and a message from the Mayor. Hard copies are currently available at Borough Hall. She reminded the Council that Monmouth Park's annual Haskell Day event will take place on Saturday, July 19th, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. She noted that live music would be featured during and following the event at Blue Grotto. Acting Clerk Kramer informed the Council that the Borough Box would not be available for this event. She extended her thanks to Recreation Director Kelle Borough for organizing a recent music event in the park, stating it was a fantastic evening. Acting Clerk Kramer informed the Council that Baseline Social has submitted an application for an Extension of Premises Permit in connection with an upcoming beer festival scheduled for October 4th, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. She shared the proposed location of the event and noted that it would be a ticketed event. Baseline Social has arranged for private security, and Chief Grimes has expressed no concerns regarding the event. In conclusion, Acting Clerk Kramer thanked Jeanne Smith for her dedication and service to the Borough and extended her best wishes for the future.

10. Old Business:

NONE:

- 11. New Business:** Mayor Tvrdek noted that there are several resolutions on the agenda for review during the current workshop session. These resolutions are scheduled for a vote at the next regular meeting, at which time the public will also have an opportunity to provide comment. The Mayor highlighted several upcoming changes and developments, including the addition of new members to the Fire Department, First Aid Squad, and matters related to tax foreclosure. He addressed a specific property issue involving a lot and block where bamboo has encroached onto a neighboring property. The property owners have been unresponsive, and as a result, the Borough will proceed with the foreclosure process. Upon completion, the Borough will assume responsibility for the property's maintenance. Mayor Tvrdek also referenced a resolution concerning an increase in salary for the Court Administrator, following the successful completion of a relevant course. He concluded by stating that any questions or further discussion on these items will be addressed at the next regular meeting.

Resolution - Payment of Bills

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Resolution - Authorizing Mayor and Administrator to Execute TWA Applications

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Resolution - Authorizing Redemption of Tax Sale Certificate #23-00014:

Resolution - Requesting Approval to Amend the 2025 Municipal Budget for NJ American Water

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Resolution - Approving Stephan Molnar Jr. for Oceanport First Aid Membership

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Resolution - Approving Michael McGhee for Fire Department Member

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Resolution - Authorizing In Rem Tax Foreclosure of Block 117 Lot 49 Gold Street

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Resolution - Authorizing The Purchase & Renewal of The Borough's Spatial Data Logic Software

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Resolution - Authorizing a Salary Increase for Gianna Tafuri as per the Employment Agreement

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Resolution - Authorizing Veteran Jamie Leslie Tax Exemption

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Resolution Authorizing Redemption of Tax Sale Certificate 24-00003 Block 44 Lot 8:

Resolution - Authorizing an MOU with FMERA for Engineering Services - JCP&L Electrical Substation

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Resolution - Amending 2025 Budget for FMERA MOU Replace Army Electrical Grid

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Resolution - Awarding Contract to Colliers Replacement of Electrical Grid - FMERA

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Resolution - Authorizing the Ratification Award of an Emergency Contract for Sink Hole Repair and Pipe Replacement on Seneca

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Resolution - Authorizing an Increase in the Bid Threshold

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Resolution - Authorizing Change Order #2 Final 2023 Road Program Mecor Inc.:

Resolution - Approving 1st Aid Squad Member Thomas Viscuso

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Resolution - Approving 1st Aid Squad Member Cassandra Cabrera:

Resolution - Authorizing Participation in the 1033 LESA Program for 2025

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Resolution - Approving 1st Aid Squad Member Marco Molino:

Resolution - Authorizing Preliminary Investigation of HABcore and Lunch Break Projects

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12. Minutes: Mayor Tvrdek informed the Council that they will have an opportunity to review the meeting

minutes, if they have not already done so. A vote to approve the minutes will take place during the next regular meeting.

01-02-2025 Reorganization Minutes

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04-03-25 Workshop Meeting Minutes:

13. **Mayor Tvrdik's Report:** Mayor Tvrdik announced that Skinny Flowers Brewery would be the next business opening in Riverwalk, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled for August 1st at 11:00 AM. He also reported that the Borough, in collaboration with Shore Little League and Enzo's Pizza, recently hosted Yankees prospect Rafael Flores. The Mayor praised the success of the Music in the Park event organized by Kelle Borough, noting that approximately 120 people attended. He recognized the Department of Public Works (DPW) for their full-time support throughout the event. Regarding infrastructure updates, Mayor Tvrdik informed the governing body that the River Water Reclamation Authority has taken over Boy Scout Park as part of a sewer project connecting Oceanport and Monmouth Beach to Raccoon Island. He noted that while installing a new line, a machine became lodged underground and could not be retrieved. The machine will remain in place, and a bypass will be constructed, causing delays to the project. He stated that the Borough would notify nearby residents when active work resumes, which will require 24/7 operations in the park. The Mayor has requested that truck operations occur during daytime hours only. He emphasized that the project would proceed as planned due to its critical engineering scope. In response to a question from Councilman O'Brien regarding potential penalties from Green Acres for project delays, the Mayor stated that they would apply for an extension and is awaiting further information, as this will impact the project timeline. Finally, Mayor Tvrdik noted that Dennis Galvin and the team at Two Rivers will provide monthly updates to the Borough and residents. He added that a resident who experienced a cracked tile has been in direct contact with both the Borough and the Sewer Authority regarding the issue.
14. **Public Comments:** Mark Patterson of 40 Ithaca Avenue inquired about the potential environmental impact of abandoning the piece of machinery left underground during the sewer project. Mayor Tvrdik explained that the front of the equipment is inaccessible and that it is located well below the water's surface. He stated he would follow up to determine whether the machinery would be encapsulated. The Mayor noted there may be some runoff, but described the equipment as being about the size of a minivan. Mr. Patterson also referenced a previous instance involving an extension application, noting that a similar process occurred with Old Wharf Park. Tom Murphy of 15 Pocahontas Avenue thanked Borough staff for addressing the concern he raised at the last meeting regarding the small beach at the end of Nicholson Place. He expressed his willingness to serve on any future committee or working group formed to improve that area, noting its personal significance from his childhood in the community. There were no further public comments. Councilman Keeshen made a motion to close the public comment portion of the meeting, seconded by Councilman Deerin.
15. **Adjourn to Executive Session:**
Resolution #2025-194 - Authorizing an Executive Session, July 17, 2025, Matters Relating to the Purchase, Lease or Acquisition of Real Property-Open Space and Matters Relating to Collective Bargaining and Contract Agreements:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (6 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Richard Gallo
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

16. Return from Executive Session:

RESULT:	ADOPTED (6 TO 0)
MOVER:	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
SECONDER:	Councilman Michael O'Brien
AYES:	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

17. Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Kramer
DEPUTY BOROUGH CLERK