



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL MINUTES • REGULAR MEETING

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

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025 at 7:00 PM

1. **Call 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 Michael O'Brien	7:10pm
	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper	
	Councilman William Deerin	
	Councilwomen Kara Manna	
	Mayor Thomas Tvrdik	
ABSENT:	Councilman Bryan Keeshen	

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 anyone would like to come up, as they added to resolutions that were posted on the website. One for amending the 2025 budget for MOU Fire Hydrant Abandonment Project and the other is approving a cooperative purchase agreement with Monmouth County for a land preservation incentive project. Seeing no one, Councilwoman Cooper motioned to close this portion and Councilwoman Manna seconded.
6. **Administrator's Report:** Borough Administrator Donna Phelps stated that she had no additional items to report beyond the discussion previously presented.

DISCUSSION: MJPPI 2025 Annual Update:

Borough Administrator Donna Phelps reported that the Borough became a member of the MJPPI in 2023. She explained that the current update covers public outreach conducted by MJPPI municipal members and stakeholders during 2024, noting that no new members

were added that year.

Ms. Phelps stated that two MJPPI Committee meetings were held for the 2025 update, on December 13, 2024, and June 19, 2025. Discussions focused on enhancing stakeholder outreach and reminding municipal members of the need to continue their outreach efforts. She confirmed that all municipal members and stakeholders were present at the meetings.

Administrator Phelps further noted that the update must be prepared annually and presented at a governing body meeting. She explained that this process supports efforts to improve the Borough's Community Rating System classification. As a result, the Borough's rating has improved from Class 8 to Class 7, which provides residents with 10% savings and 15% on flood insurance, an increase of the previous.

7. Clerk's Report:

Acting Clerk Stephanie Kramer reminded residents that the General Election will be held on November 4. She noted that the ballot drop box at Borough Hall would open on September 19th at 8:30 a.m. The last day to register to vote is October 14th, and early voting will take place from October 25th through November 2nd.

Acting Clerk Kramer also announced that the townwide yard sale is scheduled for September 27th and 28th. Registration is available on the Borough website, with a deadline of September 24th at 3:00 p.m.

8. Consent Agenda: Mayor Tvrdik asked if anything needed to be pulled separately or had any questions on any of the Consent Agenda items.

Resolution #2025-245 - Payment of Bills:

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

Resolution #2025-246 - Appointing Anthony Montagna as Building Subcode Official:

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

Resolution #2025-247 - Appointments to Boards and Committees — Recreation:

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

Resolution #2025-248 - Amending the Salary Resolution:

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

Resolution #2025-249 - Certification of the Annual Audit:

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

Resolution #2025-250 - Authorizing a Refund for Overpayment of 8 Arcana Ave:

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

Resolution #2025-251- Approving the Corrective Action Plan Related to the 2024 Audit:

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

Resolution #2025-252 - Amending the Personnel Policy to Update and Implement New Policies:

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

Resolution #2025-253 - Appointments to Boards and Committees- Environmental:

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

Resolution #2025-254 - Awarding a Contract for Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Services Between Allegiance Trucks LLC:

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

Resolution #2025-255 - Declaring the Mega Parcel on the Former Fort Monmouth as a Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment:

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

Resolution #2025-256- Amending 2025 Budget for FMERA MOU Fire Hydrant Abandonment Project:

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

Resolution #2025-257 - Approving Cooperative Purchase Agreement with Monmouth County for Land Preservation Incentive Project:

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

9. First Reading Ordinances:

Mayor Tvrdik reported that Ordinance #115, Amending the UCC Fees, had been read at the last meeting but required adjustments. The Ordinance was reintroduced at this meeting. Councilwoman Cooper requested the reintroduction of the Ordinance to amend certain fees and asked Acting Clerk Kramer to read the Ordinance by title only. Acting Clerk Kramer read: *An Ordinance Amending Chapter 170, Uniform Construction Code, Section 170-3.*

Councilwoman Cooper made a motion to approve the Ordinance on first reading and to hold the public hearing at the October 2, 2025, Council Meeting, with advertisement in accordance with law. The motion was seconded by Councilman Deerin.

Mayor Tvrdik then announced Ordinance #116, Adopting a Redevelopment Plan for the Mega Parcel. Councilwoman Cooper requested the introduction of this Ordinance and asked Acting Clerk Kramer to read it by title only. Acting Clerk Kramer read: *An Ordinance Adopting a Redevelopment Plan for the Mega Parcel located in the Borough of Oceanport within the former Fort Monmouth pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.*

Councilwoman Cooper made a motion to approve the Ordinance on first reading and to hold the public hearing at the October 2, 2025, Council Meeting, with advertisement in accordance with law. The motion was seconded by Councilman Deerin.

Ordinance #1115 - Amending UCC Fees :

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

Ordinance #1116 - Adopting Redevelopment Plan for the Mega Parcel:

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

ABSTAIN:	None
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10. Second Reading & Public Hearing Ordinances:

Councilwoman Cooper asked Acting Clerk Stephanie Kramer to read the affidavit of publication and the proposed Ordinance by title only. Acting Clerk Kramer stated that the notice was published in the *Two River Times* on September 11, 2025, in accordance with the law. She then read the title: *Ordinance Authorizing the Borough to Purchase Block 65, Lot 3.01 and Block 65, Lot 34 for Open Space Preservation Purposes.*

Mayor Tvrdik noted that this was the second reading and opened the floor to the public for comments on this ordinance. There were no comments. Councilman Gallo made a motion to close the public comment portion, which was seconded by Councilwoman Manna. Councilwoman Cooper then made a motion to adopt the Ordinance and advertise in accordance with the law. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gallo.

Mayor Tvrdik announced for the record that Councilman O'Brien arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Councilwoman Cooper asked Acting Clerk Kramer to read the affidavit of publication and Ordinance #1114 by title only. Acting Clerk Kramer stated that the notice was published in the *Two River Times* on September 11, 2025, in accordance with the law. She then read the title: *Ordinance Amending Chapter 72, Officers and Employees, Article 2, Personnel Policies, Section 72-6, Delineating Responsibility for the Enforcement of Personnel Policies, and Reading Section 72-7, Entitled Job Descriptions.*

Mayor Tvrdik noted that this was a second reading and opened the floor to the public for comment. There were none. Councilman Deerin made a motion to close the public comment portion, which was seconded by Councilman O'Brien. Councilwoman Cooper then made a motion to adopt the ordinance and advertise in accordance with the law. The motion was seconded by Councilman Deerin.

Ordinance #1113 - Open Space Acquisition:

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

Ordinance #1114 - Creating Job Descriptions:

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

NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

11. Council Standing Committee Reports:

Councilman Deerin - Parks & Recreation :

Councilman Deerin announced that Summer's End will be held on Saturday, September 27, beginning at 5:00 p.m., with fireworks to follow later in the evening. He stated that The Soulstirs would provide music entertainment, and a cornhole tournament will also take place. Councilman Deerin noted that the last Music in the Park event for the season will be held on Friday, September 26. He commented on the parks and thanked the Department of Public Works for their efforts in maintaining the facilities. Mayor Tvrdik inquired about the installation of the flagpole. Borough Administrator Donna Phelps stated that installation is scheduled for the beginning of October due to a required mark out. Mayor Tvrdik suggested that a temporary light might be considered until the permanent installation is completed.

Councilman Gallo - Public Works & Engineering: Councilman Gallo provided an update on the 2024 Road Program, noting that the project continues to move forward. He reported that sidewalks and curbs along Maple Avenue have been completed and that street paving will take place over the next 4–6 weeks.

Councilman Keeshen - Public Safety: Absent.

Councilman O'Brien - Finance & Administration : Councilman O'Brien directed a question to Borough Administrator Phelps regarding the MJPPi report and its discussion of high-density housing in relation to flooding concerns. Administrator Phelps responded that during both the MJPPi and NJ Coastal Coalition meetings, she has never heard density discussed as a topic. Mayor Tvrdik noted that the NJDEP's recent news release mentioned proposed changes to coastal flooding regulations, with an intent to adopt them by the end of the year. He explained that the NJDEP's website references low- and moderate-income housing projects as eligible for review under the Flood Hazard Area Control Act rules and the hardship exception process, which allows relaxation of certain standards when public safety is not jeopardized. Councilman O'Brien expressed concern that there is no state-level oversight group participating in this type of committee, particularly when such developments are occurring in and around Oceanport. He stated that this lack of oversight is not a good practice. Mayor Tvrdik added that none of these initiatives involve flood mitigation and that they are contributing to additional water resources being diverted onto non-permeable surfaces. Councilman O'Brien noted that this issue was outside of his area of responsibility but wanted his comments on the record. Mayor Tvrdik concluded by stating that this is why it is important to preserve and maintain open space.

Councilwoman Manna - Health & Human Services : Councilwoman Mana stated that the topics discussed in the Environmental and Water Watch meetings align with ongoing conversations regarding redevelopment. She noted that one additional element to consider is whether the sewer system is large enough to support the proposed development. She

mentioned that Dennis Galvin will provide a detailed update on current initiatives, including pump stations and a new line under the Shewsberry River to Raccoon Island. Councilwoman Mana thanked Richard Gruskos for his years of dedication to the Water Watch and Environmental Committee and welcomed new members Fred Filippone and Ron Sickler. She reported that water levels have remained mostly stable, with the exception of one, and said she will provide further updates after speaking with Dennis Galvin. Councilwoman Mana also thanked Public Works for maintaining clean and safe streets. She announced that the second annual Mayor's Ball would be held on October 3, 2025, at 7 p.m., the Shore Regional Open House will take place on Thursday, October 9, at 6 p.m., and Dr. English's first Superintendent Coffee House will be on October 28 at 6 p.m., with the subject focusing on the road to Middle States re-accreditation. She mentioned that Jessica Sargent was sworn in to fill a vacant seat on the Board of Education and continued updating the Council on Open School Night events, teacher contracts, and upcoming school year holidays.

Councilwoman Cooper - Planning & Development:

Councilwoman Cooper thanked the Department of Public Works for delivering cabinets to the First Aid Building. She reported that a new in-house training program has begun for EMS and this would help them out. She noted several upcoming community events: Oktoberfest will be held on October 4th at the Hook and Ladder, and the First Aid Squad will host a bingo night on September 20th. She also announced that the First Aid Squad, in conjunction with the celebration of the nation's 250th birthday, has produced a commemorative blanket featuring updated Oceanport landmarks. The blankets will be available for purchase. Councilwoman Cooper further reported that the Fire Department is actively engaged in its fundraising drives. With respect to the Planning Board, Councilwoman Cooper stated that she attended a meeting with residents of the Riverside section (400 block) where Netflix representatives addressed questions and concerns. She noted that Netflix will appear before the Planning Board on October 14. Mayor Tvrdik asked Acting Clerk Kramer if the plans were available on the Borough website. Ms. Kramer replied that they are currently available for review at Borough Hall and can be posted online at any time. The Mayor commented that it was beneficial to meet with residents who would be directly impacted, and that having approximately 30 days before the Board meeting allows residents time to review and prepare any questions.

12. Mayor Tvrdik's Report:

Mayor Tvrdik announced that Netflix will present their application on October 14th at 7 p.m. for Phase 2B, which is the 400 District. He also updated the Council on Monmouth Park and its future expansion plans, which include creating a youth sports mecca. The project aims to diversify beyond housing and keep the racetrack viable, including the completion of sidewalks. The Mayor addressed the speeding issue in town, noting that a resident suggested reducing the 40 MPH zone to 25 MPH. He reached out to Assemblywoman Vicki Flynn for assistance with the DOT to begin the process, explaining that the Borough would only need to pass an ordinance with two readings, and state approval is unnecessary unless state highways are affected. Borough Attorney Bayer will confirm the details. Mayor Tvrdik commented that Councilman Keeshan although absent today, has expressed

his support for the change as well. Councilman O'Brien stated that he believes the speed limit throughout town should generally be 25 MPH. Councilwoman Manna agreed, noting the number of children in Oceanport. Councilwoman Cooper also supported the reduction but voiced concern that it should extend to areas such as Wolf Hill, Port Au Peck, and Osprey Lane, where drivers tend to be impatient with school buses. Councilman Deerin suggested that establishing the area as a slow zone where drivers expect enforcement could improve compliance. Chief Grimes agreed to extend the proposed speed limit reduction to Eatontown Boulevard. Mayor Tvrdek asked Borough Attorney Andy Bayer to begin with Myrtle to Branchport, so the ordinance can be prepared for the October meeting, after which further extensions can be explored. They discussed focusing first on Borough-owned roads rather than State or County roads. Chief Grimes reported that the enforcement zones are going well and that, ideally, they will become unnecessary once awareness spreads. He noted that other towns have contacted him for guidance on implementing similar programs. Mayor Tvrdek shared that Bob Berg of the DPW as a result of the plantings donated by Oceanport resident Gary Hager, had shown him pictures of the progress at Charles Park, noting how beautiful the area is becoming. He also announced a blood drive on September 23rd at the Fort Gym from 12–5 p.m., benefiting RWJ Health Care patients. The Mayor mentioned that the 250th anniversary kickoff will take place at the Summer's End Festival, with a table celebrating the nation's anniversary. He also announced an upcoming "250 Committee" event—a recipe swap and pie contest—on Wednesday, the 22nd, from 12:30–2 p.m. at the Old Wharf House. The winning recipes will be featured in the *Oceanport 250 Cookbook*. Lastly, Mayor Tvrdek reported attending the RWJ Barnabas breakfast, where he learned about RWJ's services and the planned hospital expansion of Tinton Falls, including a cancer center and new mental health, outpatient services, and emergency room facilities. The Mayor closed by extending condolences to the Ferran family on the passing of Joan Ferrin.

13. Public Comments:

Mark Patterson stated that he was in support of the speed limit reduction and noted that along Branchport toward Monmouth Park Racetrack, drivers are treating the road like a two-lane instead of turning right as intended. The Mayor asked for clarification on the exact location, and Mr. Patterson explained that it is at Branchport and Port Au Peck, going east toward the racetrack, where drivers are passing straight through to get ahead of traffic by using the right lane. The Mayor stated that he would make Chief Grimes aware of the issue by sending an email.

Next, Roseanne Letson of Tinton Falls stated that the recent speaker event held about a week ago was a great success, drawing over 30 attendees and even impressing Tom Kavanaugh. She shared that TJ is working on a new program in conjunction with the 250th anniversary of the country and Monmouth County history. Ms. Letson announced that TJ has appeared on talk shows, in magazines, and in newspapers. She noted that the Historical Committee will not be represented at the Summer's End Festival but still has all the merchandise they created, which she described in detail along with pricing.

Letson announced that the next speaker will be Ken Magos, host of NJ PBS's *Drive By History*, who will present on October 9th at 7 p.m. His topic will be "Monmouth County Historical Markers: From Revolution to Radar." She also shared the remaining speakers scheduled for the year and their topics

and mentioned that TJ was listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for visiting the most presidential grave sites in the shortest amount of time.

Chief Grimes stated that a hiring notice had been posted for a patrolman position and encouraged anyone who knows qualified candidates to visit policeapp.com and search "Oceanport" for detail. He also announced that on Tuesday, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., there will be an active shooter drill at Maple Place School as part of the Central Monmouth Active Shooter Group.

There were no further comments. Councilman O'Brien motioned to close this portion of the meeting, and Councilman Deerin seconded.

14. Adjournment:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Kramer
ACTING BOROUGH CLERK