



**BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL  
MINUTES • REGULAR MEETING**

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

**JANUARY 22, 2026 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:**

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Stephanie Kramer, ActingBorough 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:** There were no public comments on Action Items.
6. **Discussion Item:**

**Vacating Paper Streets within the Borough:**

Mayor Tvrdik introduced a discussion item regarding the potential vacation of paper streets within the Borough. He explained that the matter arose in connection with a Planning Board application on Port-au-Peck Avenue, where an applicant seeking to subdivide a property had inquired about the possibility of vacating an adjacent 10-foot Borough right-of-way to assist with lot conformity. The Mayor noted that while such action would not fully resolve the applicant’s needs, it could provide additional width and square footage.

The Mayor further reviewed other undeveloped paper streets within the Borough, including

portions of Iroquois Avenue, Onondaga Avenue, and Centennial Avenue, and discussed prior maintenance efforts, safety concerns related to overgrown or unmaintained areas, and potential future development impacts. He stated that the Borough has historically declined to vacate streets that provide water access and referenced prior instances where paper streets had been vacated.

The Mayor also outlined the general process for vacating such rights-of-way, including offering the property to adjoining property owners, and noted how specific streets could potentially be divided among neighboring lots. He then opened the discussion to the governing body to determine whether there was interest in pursuing the matter further and whether to hear from the public or affected property owners.

Christine Marks, 18 Centennial Avenue, addressed the governing body and inquired as to the intent of the paper street, specifically questioning whether it was intended to provide access for traffic to the property or to facilitate subdivision of the property as an interior lot rather than a corner lot for variance purposes. Mayor Tvrdik responded that the use of the paper street would be determined by the applicant. He explained that, based on the map, the portion of the paper street near Centennial Avenue would be offered to adjoining property owners, including Monmouth Park and Mr. Thomas Stothart Jr., and would not provide access to the applicant's property. Rather, it would effectively eliminate access and instead provide the applicant with additional square footage and potentially an additional five to ten feet of width, depending on whether the adjoining property owner accepted or declined the offer.

Councilman Gallo stated his concerns about the Port Au Peck section and who owns which side of the property. They had a discussion about the streets to vacate. Mayor Tvrdik explained that Iroquois Avenue would be divided between the adjoining property owners, including Mario Zolofra and the neighboring property owners, should they elect to accept it. He further stated that a portion of Onondaga Avenue would also be offered to Mr. Zolofra, with additional sections extending to 301 Shrewsbury Partners and the Borough of Oceanport, and noted that a small corner portion would be allocated to Newport Wood, Inc. Council President Cooper stated that she continues to have no interest in vacating any paper streets, Borough property, or rights-of-way, noting that doing so could set a precedent, and reaffirmed her position to oppose such actions. Councilman Deerin and Councilman Gallo agreed with Councilwoman Cooper.

Councilman O'Brien brought up a discussion about adding value to the land and stated he would need more time to determine a final yes or no. Mayor Tvrdik noted that there is a house built on a paper street on River Street and Oceanport Ave and the Council at that time thought it was a good idea and that we should take these on a case-to-case basis. Councilwoman Manna stated that she agrees with Councilman O'Brien and needs more time. They concluded that they would explore this item in the future.

## **7. Administrator's Report:**

Borough Administrator Phelps reported that, after 14 years of service, she stepped down from the MELJIF Executive Board and has accepted a position on the Central Jersey Health Insurance Fund

Board, noting that this role would assist her in managing employee medical benefits. She further reported that the Borough received a \$330,000 reimbursement from the County for the open space grant associated with lighting improvements at Maria Gatta Park.

Ms. Phelps also provided an update regarding a grant opportunity through the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) for film partner municipal infrastructure projects. She explained that the Borough was invited to apply for up to \$500,000 in funding related to the Netflix development, but noted that the process involved tight and shifting deadlines. Initial proposals included a turf field near Borough Hall, expansion of the War Memorial, and electrical infrastructure improvements at Fort Monmouth, including the transfer of services to JCP&L and demolition of an unused substation. She stated that the turf field was later deemed ineligible, and alternative project ideas were requested on short notice.

Ms. Phelps advised that, in consultation with the Mayor, potential alternative uses included roadway improvements to address increased traffic from the Netflix project, including the addition of sidewalks along Monmouth Boulevard and extending toward Comanche, Port-au-Peck Avenue, and Branchport Avenue. She indicated that she paused further submission until the matter could be presented to the governing body and noted that she would continue to pursue available funding opportunities, while acknowledging the challenges associated with the application process. Mayor Tvrdik stated that Monmouth Boulevard would be a key corridor for enhancing walkability, connectivity, and bikeability, noting that similar improvements had already been completed along Myrtle Avenue and that such a project could exceed the \$500,000 grant amount. Borough Administrator Phelps added that NJEDA requires proposed projects to directly support the studio or film partner facility and address impacts related to the development, explaining that a prior attempt to justify a turf field project on that basis had been denied. She indicated that she would continue to explore whether the proposed improvements could meet the eligibility criteria. Borough Administrator Phelps stated that she and the Mayor met with each department head and their primary staff member to discuss the prior year and expectations for 2026, noting that the meetings took place the previous week. She commented that the meetings went well and were beneficial for both administration and staff. She further stated that there is an intention to hold additional meetings of this nature throughout 2026. The Borough Administrator concluded her report and invited any questions.

8. **Consent Agenda:** Councilman Deerin requested clarification regarding the Monmouth Park Heliport letter. Mayor Tvrdik stated that the letter is a formality, noting that it is completed annually to permit approximately ten flights.

**Resolution #2026-38 - Payment of Bills:**

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

**Resolution #2026-39 - Authorizing a Salary Increase for Gianna Tafuri:**

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

**Resolution #2026-40 - Appointing Thomas A. Fleming as Laborer in DPW:**

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

**Resolution #2026-41 - Accepting the Resignation of Sharon O'Conner:**

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

**Resolution #2026-42 - Accepting the Resignation of Alexander Boyce as Class II Officer:**

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

**Resolution #2026-43 - Authorizing 2026 Budget Appropriation Reserve Transfer:**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED (6 TO 0)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Councilman Richard Gallo
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Councilman Michael O'Brien
<b>AYES:</b>	Richard Gallo, Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna

<b>NAYS:</b>	None
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None

**Resolution #2026-44 - Authorizing An Emergency Temporary Appropriation-JCPL:**

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

**Resolution #2026-45 - Authorizing An Agreement With JCP&L for the Installation of Electric Distribution Facilities:**

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

**Resolution #2026-46 - Authorizing an Emergency Temporary Appropriation-Stormwater Drainage:**

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

**Resolution #2026-47 - Authorizing a MOU Between FMERA and the Borough of Oceanport for Stormwater Infrastructure:**

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

**Resolution #2026-48 - Awarding Contract to Colliers for Drainage Improvements:**

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

**Resolution #2026-49 - Authorizing Colliers to Proceed with the Bidding Process for Drainage Improvements:**

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

**Resolution #2026-50 - Authorizing Change Order #1- Final - 400 Area Parallel:**

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

**Resolution #2026-51 - Authorizing Change #1- Final order - 2024 Road Program:**

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

**Resolution #2026-52 - Authorizing Change Order #1- Final-Asbestos Abatement:**

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

**Resolution #2026-53 - Authorizing a Refund to FMERA for Balance of Contract for Asbestos Abatement and Demolition of FMERA Buildings:**

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

**Resolution #2026-54 - Authorizing a Contract with Community Grants, Planning & Housing:**

**Resolution #2026-55 - Authorizing a Contract with Community Grants, Planning & Housing to Service as the Admin Agent:**

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

**Resolution #2026-56 - Authorizing an Exception to Noise Ordinance- 2025 Road Program- Fiore Paving:**

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

**Resolution #2026-57 - Authorizing Letter to NJDOT for Monmouth Park Heliport:**

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

**Resolution #2026-58 - Approving Kevin A. Stout for Fire Department Member:**

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

**Resolution #2026-59 - Appointments to Boards & Committees, Recreation:**

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

**Resolution #2026-60 -Authorizing Competitive Contracting for a Turf Fields Sports Consultant:**

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

**Resolution #2026-61 - Appointing Stacey La Bruno as Violations Clerk to the Court Office:**

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

**Resolution #2026-62 - Authorizing Snow Removal Contract:**

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

<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None
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**9. First Reading Ordinances:**

**Ordinance #1118 - Reducing Speed Limit along Port-Au-Peck Avenue from 40 MPH to 25 MPH:**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED (5 TO 1)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Councilwomen Kara Manna
<b>AYES:</b>	Bryan Keeshen, Michael O'Brien, Patricia Cooper, William Deerin, Kara Manna
<b>NAYS:</b>	Richard Gallo
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	None

**10. Council Standing Committee Reports:**

**Councilman Deerin - Parks and Recreation:** Councilman Deerin commented that this is the slowest time of year for Parks and Recreation until the weather improves. He stated that a meeting was held the previous evening regarding scheduling for the upcoming year, noting that it went very well and that the schedule is shaping up positively. Councilman Deerin noted that Parks and Recreation had a very successful year last year and commended Kelly Burrough and her staff for their efforts, stating they did an excellent job. He expressed appreciation for their hard work and stated he is looking forward to the upcoming year. He added that if anyone has ideas for events or suggestions for changes, they should contact him.

**Councilman Gallo - Public Works and Engineering:**

Councilman Gallo stated that, based on the forecast for the upcoming weekend, preparation is essential for a potential storm. He noted that he visited the Department of Public Works earlier in the day and observed that all trucks were prepared and stocked with salt. Councilman Gallo stated that DPW Supervisor Steve Briskey provided a written update, which he read into the record.

He reported that, due to investments made by the governing body and funded by taxpayers, the Oceanport Department of Public Works is in its strongest position to manage a snow event. He noted that employees have worked on snow equipment throughout the year and that staff have participated in meetings and training related to snow and ice removal, including the use of salt and brine, plow operations, and driver training.

Councilman Gallo stated that once primary and secondary roads, as well as emergency service buildings including police, Borough Hall, fire stations, EMS, schools, and emergency parking areas are cleared, DPW divides the Borough into four zones. He explained that equipment is then assigned to each zone to continue snow removal and address icing conditions, while maintaining coverage on main and secondary roads. He

added that DPW will also respond to EMS and fire calls as needed to assist with roadway access.

He further stated that residents can assist by removing vehicles, including boat trailers, as well as basketball hoops, garbage cans, and other items from roadways. He encouraged residents to shovel sidewalks and clear snow around fire hydrants near their properties. He also advised that snow and water should not be deposited into roadways, as this can create hazardous ice conditions.

Councilman Gallo outlined available equipment, noting that DPW has three loaders with plows, three single-axle dump trucks, an additional single-axle dump truck with a plow, a masonry truck equipped with brine, four pickup trucks, a rack body truck, various walk-behind snowblowers, and two ride-on lawn tractors with plows. He added that additional contractor equipment is on standby if needed for larger snow events.

Councilman Gallo expressed his appreciation to DPW Supervisor Briskey and the DPW staff for their efforts and readiness ahead of the anticipated storm.

#### **Councilman Keeshen - Public Safety :**

Councilman Keeshen commented on the anticipated storm, emphasizing the importance of residents removing vehicles from roadways to assist with curb-to-curb plowing and to ensure access for emergency services. He also cautioned residents about the potential for power outages and advised that generators should not be operated inside garages.

Councilman Keeshen commended the First Aid Squad following a recent call, noting that the Borough received an email praising their professionalism. He stated that the correspondence pertained to an incident on Sunday, November 2nd at the Park Loft, and summarized that the crew remained calm, professional, and focused while providing outstanding care until additional resources arrived. He noted the remarks of Derek Stitzel, who, as a medical professional, acknowledged the challenges of such situations and emphasized that volunteer EMS providers are essential to the community. Councilman Keeshen specifically thanked Jerry and Tony for their efforts and commended the entire Oceanport EMS organization for their continued dedication.

He also expressed appreciation to Chief Grimes for recently appointing a task force on street lighting, noting that two qualified individuals have been assigned. Councilman Keeshen stated that residents should contact the Police Department if a street light is out so that the issue can be addressed with JCP&L.

Councilman Keeshen reported that Oceanport will house one of three drones to be activated by the County radio room, with the others located in Middletown and Neptune. He noted that the drones will be dispatched and monitored remotely and will serve as an important resource for emergency services throughout the region.

He further stated that cameras at Gatta Park are nearly operational, noting that Chief Grimes has been working with the County Sheriff's Office on the project. He expressed

appreciation to the Sheriff for their support, adding that the cameras will also be monitored by the radio room.

Mayor Tvrdik added that discussions with Sheriff Golden and Chief Grimes included plans to install cameras at Blackberry Bay Park as part of upcoming renovations, which will be integrated into the County system. He concluded by noting that there has been significant progress early in the year and expressed appreciation for the ongoing efforts.

**Councilman O' Brien - Finance and Administration :** Councilman O'Brien stated that this is a very quiet time for Finance and Administration and noted that he did not have a report for the evening.

**Councilwoman Manna - Health and Human Services:**

Councilwoman Manna reported that there are numerous updates from the schools and began with water and environmental matters. She stated that ongoing water testing in Oceanport continues, noting that conditions in December made testing difficult, but efforts are resuming in January. She further stated that Water Watch was notified of a wastewater incident in the Navesink River near the Monmouth Boat Club, which is being monitored. She added that discussions are underway with marine professionals regarding water monitoring, quality conditions, and the potential installation of oyster reefs to help filter the river. Councilwoman Manna also noted that dredging of the Shrewsbury River has been completed.

She reported that the Environmental Committee discussed several items, including Netflix construction, the use of temporary watering systems for stormwater solutions, impervious coverage concerns on individual properties, new construction, and dock and bulkhead reviews. She announced that the next Water Watch and Environmental Committee meeting is scheduled for February 9th at the Old Workhouse and that all are welcome to attend. She added that Mr. Mark Patterson and Dr. Barry are expected to provide updates, including information related to the School Board.

Councilwoman Manna reported that initial preschool acceptance notifications for the 2026–2027 school year were issued on Friday, January 16th. She stated that the district is awaiting a decision from the New Jersey Department of Education regarding funding for two additional free preschool classes, with an anticipated update in mid-March.

She stated that the Oceanport Board of Education met the previous evening and approved the 2026–2027 school calendar, which is available in the meeting agenda online and will also be posted on the district website. She further noted that, in recognition of January as New Jersey School Board Recognition Month, the Board adopted a resolution honoring school boards statewide for their service.

Councilwoman Manna reported that students in the gifted and talented program participated in the Future City Competition at Rutgers University, where one team received an award for most innovative infrastructure design, another for most organized city, and a third team placed seventh overall. She stated that the students will be formally recognized

at a future Board of Education meeting.

She advised that work on the 2026–2027 school budget is underway, with the Financial Committee actively reviewing and developing the proposal. She noted that the tentative budget hearing is scheduled for March 18, 2026, and the final budget hearing for April 26, 2026. She also reminded residents that schools will be closed on Monday, February 16th in observance of Presidents Day.

Regarding Shore Regional High School, Councilwoman Manna reported that the Shore Players will present “Once Upon a One More Time” from March 13th through March 15th and March 20th through March 22nd, with ticket information available online. She also noted that the Council will recognize the three state championship teams from fall 2025 at the February 12th Council meeting, including girls track, girls field hockey, and girls soccer. She announced that the Shore Senior Fashion Show will take place on February 22nd, with additional details to follow.

Councilwoman Manna further reported that a member of the Shore Student Council and an Oceanport resident was elected as New Jersey Student Council Vice President, calling it a significant achievement and a strong representation of the district. She also acknowledged Mr. Frank Pingitore, who was honored at the December Board of Education meeting for over 30 years of service upon his retirement.

She concluded by encouraging residents to visit the Oceanport Library page on the Borough website for upcoming events and to review information from the Family Addiction Network, which recently hosted a meeting at the West Long Branch Community Center on healing from violence.

#### **Councilwoman Cooper - Planning and Development:**

Councilwoman Cooper reported that on January 12th she attended the Netflix “Lights, Camera, Fort Monmouth” closing ceremony, noting that several state, county, and local dignitaries were present, along with members of the public and Netflix executives. She stated that the event marked the closing of the property and the commencement of construction, which is already progressing quickly. Councilwoman Cooper commented that the ceremony was well executed and expressed appreciation to those within the Borough who contributed to the event, recognizing it as a significant accomplishment.

She also discussed activity at Riverwalk, noting that several businesses are in the process of opening. She stated that Perkins is expected to be the next business to open and encouraged residents to support local small businesses, emphasizing their importance to the community’s continued vitality and success.

#### **11. Mayor Tvrđik’s Report:**

Mayor Tvrđik reported on the recent Netflix closing ceremony held at the dance hall at Fort Monmouth, echoing the comments of Councilwoman Cooper. He stated that the amount of work

undertaken since the project was first introduced in early 2022 has been significant and noted the extensive teamwork and dedication from partners at the state level, the FMERA Board, and the Borough's own team. He emphasized that reaching the closing date with such a complex project would not have been possible without the collective efforts of Borough employees, volunteers serving on boards, and elected officials.

Mayor Tvrdik expressed appreciation for the individuals involved, specifically acknowledging Borough staff and team members for their contributions. He commented on the long-term benefits anticipated from Netflix's presence in Oceanport, stating that while increased traffic is expected, the Borough will experience renewed activity and visibility. He remarked that Oceanport will be "on the map" and recognized more broadly in the years ahead.

He also referenced a lighthearted interaction with the Governor during the event and noted the positive energy and collaboration among all partners involved, stating that such cooperation is not often seen. Mayor Tvrdik expressed that he was proud and grateful for the opportunity to represent Oceanport at the ceremony.

Mayor Tvrdik further reported that on February 8th, at the Old Wharf House, Augie Zillinkar and Kyle Nagy will be recognized at their Eagle Court of Honor. He noted that Oceanport continues to produce Eagle Scouts and commended the strength of the local scouting program.

He concluded by advising residents to remain safe during the anticipated storm, noting that conditions are expected to be severe. He stated that Borough officials and staff are accessible by phone and email and encouraged residents to reach out if assistance is needed. He also acknowledged the efforts of volunteers who support the community during such events.

## **12. Public Comments:**

Fred Filippone, 21 Willow Court, addressed the Governing Body and began by thanking the Chief and his department for their assistance on numerous First Aid calls. He expressed appreciation to all involved.

Mr. Filippone stated that his concern relates to vehicles parked on Borough streets during recent snowstorms. He noted that a trailer parked on or near his street created a hazardous condition, particularly in an area that freezes quickly, and stated that he nearly struck it. He commented that such obstructions hinder safe travel and can impact emergency response vehicles, noting that fire and first aid vehicles may have difficulty navigating in snowy and icy conditions.

Mr. Filippone urged the Borough to take action to address vehicles left on the street during snow events, suggesting enforcement measures such as ticketing or towing to ensure roadways are properly cleared and remain safe. He concluded his remarks by reiterating the importance of keeping streets clear during significant snowstorms. Mayor Tvrdik responded that he and Chief Grimes spent a significant amount of time together earlier in the day and discussed enforcement measures related to vehicles on Borough streets during snow events. He stated that, beginning that evening, warning

notices will be placed on vehicles and that enforcement will be strictly applied. The Mayor noted that vehicles left on the street during a snowstorm will be subject to ticketing and that officials will also be knocking on doors to notify residents and ensure compliance.

Bill Sverapa, 155 Comanche Drive, addressed the Governing Body and expressed support for the Mayor's proposal regarding the installation of sidewalks. He suggested that the project be expanded to include a multi-use sidewalk to better accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, noting safety concerns due to increasing traffic.

Mr. Sverapa stated that connectivity should be considered, including extending the sidewalk along Asbury Avenue to link with the proposed Netflix sidewalk. He further commented that, if feasible, the project could be expanded to include the peninsula area. He added that he would be supportive of such improvements even if they impacted his own property along Comanche Drive.

Mayor Tvrdek responded that, as part of the current year's road program, the Borough will be extending the sidewalk from Wyandotte Avenue along Comanche Drive. He stated that the improvement will run in front of the parking stalls at Blackberry, cross the entrance, and continue up to Mohican Avenue, noting that the project will stop there for now but represents a continued effort to expand connectivity. He commented that this concept had been suggested in prior years and emphasized that the Borough is progressing incrementally with a focus on public safety.

The Mayor further stated that recent efforts have included reducing speed limits and improving walkability, particularly in connecting sidewalks to better link areas of the Borough. He noted that the improvements are being utilized by residents, including children.

Mayor Tvrdek also referenced prior work on reducing the speed limit along Port-Au-Peck Avenue, noting increased development in the area and the importance of safety. He recounted a serious motor vehicle accident involving a family member at that intersection to illustrate the dangers of higher speeds. He explained that the difference between traveling 40 miles per hour and 25 miles per hour along that stretch equates to approximately 18 seconds, emphasizing that this minimal time difference is outweighed by the significant increase in safety. He urged consideration of these factors in future decisions regarding speed reductions and roadway safety.

Gary LaBruno, inquired about the availability of remaining parcels at Fort Monmouth following the closing of the Netflix property, specifically asking how many parcels remain undeveloped or unassigned.

Mayor Tvrdek responded that there is one parcel remaining that has not been committed. He stated that the parcel is located along Main Street, in front of the new substation, and is currently wooded. He noted that the parcel had been intentionally held in reserve in the event that additional expansion space was needed. The Mayor further stated that there are no immediate plans for the parcel and that it may potentially be conveyed to Oceanport for open space purposes. Councilman Keeshen motioned to close the public comments section and Councilman Deerin seconded.

### **13. Adjournment:**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Kramer  
ACTING BOROUGH CLERK