



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL MINUTES • REGULAR MEETING

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

FEBRUARY 26, 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:**

STATUS	NAME, TITLE	ARRIVED
PRESENT:	Councilman Richard Gallo	7:04PM
	Councilman Bryan Keeshen	
	Councilwoman Patricia Cooper	
	Councilman William Deerin	
	Councilwomen Kara Manna	
	Mayor Thomas Tvrdik	
ABSENT:	Councilman Michael O'Brien	

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:** There were no public comments. Councilwoman Cooper made the motion to close this portion of the meeting and Councilwoman Manna seconded.
6. **Administrator's Report:**

Borough Administrator Phelps reported that requests had been received from training organizations to use Mike Mac Study Field and noted that the current field use ordinance does not establish rental fees for the facility. She advised that, after reviewing practices in other municipalities, a proposed amendment would establish a rental fee of \$25 per hour, plus a \$25 field-lining fee per reservation. Council discussed a request from Ocean Surge Baseball to reserve the field on Sundays, potential impacts on existing reservations, and the participation of Oceanport residents. Councilman Deerin requested additional time to review the proposal before moving forward with an ordinance amendment.

Borough Administrator Phelps reminded Council members about the MEL/JIF risk management

seminar and noted that completion of the course would qualify the Borough for a \$250 insurance credit for each official that took the seminar.

Borough Administrator Phelps also reported that FMERA would provide matching funds to supplement the Borough's \$500,000 grant from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority related to the Netflix development, bringing the total available funding to \$1 million for infrastructure improvements. Mayor Tvrdek stated that he would like the proposed infrastructure funding, along with the separate \$3 million community benefits contribution from Netflix, to be reviewed by a Community Benefits Committee to help identify projects that would best benefit the Borough.

Council also discussed a request from Baseline Social to permit earlier Sunday opening hours. Following discussion, there was support for considering an ordinance amendment that would allow establishments to open at 8:00 a.m. seven days per week rather than requiring special approvals for Sunday openings.

7. **Clerk's Report:** Acting Clerk Stephanie Kramer reported that the Clerk's Office has had a very busy start to the new year, with residents renewing dog licenses, businesses renewing mercantile licenses, landscapers obtaining decals, and boat permits already being issued. She noted that pickleball badges went on sale January 1, and once payment is made online, badges may be picked up in the Clerk's Office. She further reported that the office has received a high volume of OPRA requests, totaling 141 since January 1. Ms. Kramer also stated that she spoke with Dennis Drazin of Monmouth Park to coordinate a date to review the Phase II plans, noting that he will appear before the Planning Board on March 10 and before Mayor and Council on March 12. She concluded her report.

8. **Consent Agenda:**

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

Councilwoman Cooper inquired about Resolution #2026-079, specifically whether the Borja Group and Mr. Santi are responsible for all turf fields or only certain fields. Mayor and Council stated that he does receive overflow usage across multiple fields. Resolution-2026-079 was taken separately.

Resolution #2026-73 - Payment of Bills:

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 #2026-74 - Approving Lawrence Seymour for Oceanport First Aid Membership:

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 #2026-75 - Approving David Pizzo for Oceanport First Aid Membership:

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 #2026-76 - Authorizing the Appointment of Sharon O'Conner as Part Time Violations Clerk:

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 #2026-77 - Authorizing Full Time Employment and Revised Salary for Michael Horton- Electrical Subcode and Inspector:

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 #2026-78 - Authorizing Full Time Employment and Revised Salary for Anthony Montagna-Building Subcode and Inspector:

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 #2026-79 - Resolution Awarding a Contract to the Borja Group for Turf Field Consultants :

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

Resolution #2026-80 - Awarding a Non-Fair and Open Contract to Intron for IT Management:

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 #2026-81 - Authorizing a Refund to FMERA for Balance of Contract for Stormwater Study Infrastructure:

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 #2026-82 - Authorizing 2026 Budget Appropriation Reserve Transfer:

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 #2026-83 - Authorizing the Purchase a Vehicle from All American Ford

Fleet:

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 #2026-84 - Authorizing the Use of Competitive Contracting for Cleaning Services for Borough Buildings :

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 #2026-85 - Amending Resolution #2024-109 Appointing Michael A. Thulen JR as Construction Official:

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 #2026-86 - Amending Resolution 2025-44 Clarifying Position of John Palmer as Plumbing Sub-Code Official :

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 #2026-87 - Authorizing an Exception to Noise Ordinance- Nurses Quarters Development:

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 #2026-88 - Urging the Legislature to Defeat S-5028 - A-6301 - Reduce the Minimum Horse Racing Dates - Monmouth Park:

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

9. Second Reading & Public Hearing Ordinances:

Ordinance #1119 - Affordable Housing Ordinance Implementing the Fourth Round Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan:

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

Ordinance #1120 - Amending Chapter 390-14 -Zoning R-5 Affordable Housing Overlay (R-5) Zone:

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

10. Council Standing Committee Reports:

Councilman Deerin - Parks and Recreation: Councilman Deerin reported that, following recent storms, the parks and recreation fields are currently not being utilized. He noted that this may create scheduling challenges for soccer games in early March and stated that the various sports organizations will need to address those issues in the coming months. No other Parks and Recreation matters were reported.

Councilman Gallo - Public Works and Engineering :

Councilman Gallo thanked the Department of Public Works employees for their efforts during the recent snowstorms. He noted that crews worked long hours and successfully cleared the roads by the day following each storm. He stated that both storms produced over a foot of snow and commended the department for handling the snow removal entirely with in-house personnel and equipment, without the need for outside contractors. Councilman Gallo remarked that, in past years, the Borough often relied on outside contractors and expressed appreciation for the department's work and dedication.

Councilman Keeshen - Public Safety : Councilman Keeshen thanked the members of the Police Department, First Aid Squad, Fire Department, OEM, and all public safety personnel for their efforts during the recent storm and for their continued commitment to training. He noted that the Fire Department's recent ice rescue training proved beneficial when members responded to rescue a deer that had become trapped on the ice. Councilman Keeshen also thanked OEM Coordinator Buzz Baldanza for the time and effort spent preparing for the storm, particularly given the potential for flooding. He expressed appreciation to all public safety personnel for their dedication and service.

Councilman O' Brien - Finance and Administration: The Mayor noted that Councilman O'Brien was absent from the meeting. He stated that, with budget season underway, the Borough's financial staff is working diligently on preparation of the upcoming budget. The Mayor specifically thanked CFO Catherine LaPorta and all those involved for their hard work and dedication, noting that additional budget-related updates would be provided at future meetings

Councilwoman Manna - Health and Human Services: Councilwoman Manna reported on behalf of the school district. She conveyed Superintendent Dr. English's appreciation to local first responders and Department of Public Works personnel for their efforts during and after the recent storm. She announced upcoming school events, including the Shore Players spring production and the Principal Parent Forum. Councilwoman Manna highlighted several student and athletic achievements, including recognition of the Maple Place boys basketball team as Coastal Intermediate Basketball League Champions, awards earned by Future City teams at the Rutgers competition, and participation by students in the All-Shore Intermediate Band. She also noted School Resource Officer Appreciation Day, the 100th day of school celebration, and a seventh-grade service project supporting Lunch Break through the school's Super Bowl food drive. She commended the students and staff for their accomplishments and community involvement.

Councilwoman Cooper - Planning and Development : Councilwoman Cooper reported that the Planning Board met on Tuesday and discussed the four items previously reviewed by the Borough Council, including matters related to building aesthetics and impervious coverage. She noted that there was differing opinion regarding the proposal to exclude swimming pools from impervious coverage calculations. Councilwoman Cooper stated that she requested Planning Board members provide their comments and any supporting information so that additional feedback could be shared with the Borough Council to assist in further consideration of the matter. No other Planning and Development matters were

reported.

11. Mayor Tvrdik's Report:

The Mayor congratulated the Maple Place boys basketball team on winning the Coastal Intermediate Basketball League Championship and noted that the team would be recognized at the March 12 Council meeting with certificates of recognition and a proclamation. He also commended Coach Birnbaum and the student athletes on their successful season.

The Mayor reported that several residents had submitted volunteer applications following recent outreach efforts encouraging community involvement. He further advised that approximately ten applications had been received for the Community Benefits Committee. Applications will remain open through the end of March, with appointments anticipated in April and committee meetings to begin thereafter.

The Mayor provided an update on traffic and pedestrian safety initiatives, noting that the County is conducting a traffic study of Monmouth Boulevard. He stated that potential improvements under review include speed reduction measures, signage enhancements, traffic signal timing adjustments, sight-line improvements, pedestrian crossing enhancements, and sidewalk expansion. He also reported that the Borough is evaluating the installation of additional speed feedback signs and continuing efforts to address traffic safety concerns throughout the community.

The Mayor thanked Borough staff, first responders, volunteers, and elected officials for their continued service and dedication to the community, particularly in response to recent winter weather events. He encouraged residents to remain engaged in local government and community activities.

12. Public Comments:

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Gary LaBruno, 51 Wyandotte Avenue, inquired why the recently approved speed limit reduction on Port-au-Peck Avenue did not extend beyond Myrtle Avenue to Main Street. The Mayor explained that the Borough elected to begin with a smaller section and evaluate its effectiveness before considering additional reductions. He noted that further review of speed limits along Port-au-Peck Avenue, potentially extending toward Wolf Hill Avenue, is under consideration and may require additional traffic studies.

Mr. LaBruno also commented on the use of pedestrian-activated flashing crossing signs, noting that their effectiveness depends on pedestrians activating the signals and suggesting public education regarding their proper use. A brief discussion followed regarding the operation, maintenance, and effectiveness of various pedestrian crossing technologies, including motion-activated systems and flashing crosswalks. No formal action was taken.

The Mayor reported that several residents and local businesses have expressed interest in donating toward community improvement projects, including speed signs, a flagpole for the Community Center, and other park enhancements. He noted that the Borough may explore the development of new welcome signs at key entrances to Oceanport to replace aging wooden signs that have deteriorated

over time. The Mayor stated that residents have already expressed interest in supporting such a project through donations and sponsorships. The Mayor announced that Oceanport resident Augie Zilincar will present and unveil his Eagle Scout veterans project on March 7 at the Old Wharf House. The project documents interviews with local veterans and will be featured during a public presentation. The Mayor encouraged residents to attend and expressed his enthusiasm for the project and its recognition of local veterans.
Councilman Deerin made the motion to close Public Comments and Councilman Keeshen seconded.

13. Adjourn to Executive Session:

Resolution #2026-89 - Authorizing Executive Session — Collective Bargaining and Contract Agreements; Litigation, Negotiations and Attorney-Client Privilege; Open Space Land Acquisition, Employment Relationship:

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

14. Return from Executive Session:

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

15. Adjournment:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Kramer
ACTING BOROUGH CLERK

