



BOROUGH OF OCEANPORT MAYOR & COUNCIL MINUTES • WORKSHOP

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

APRIL 9, 2026 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 Councilwoman Patricia Cooper Councilman William Deerin Councilwomen Kara Manna Mayor Thomas J 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. **Administrator's Report:**
6. **Discussion :** Before the two discussion items on the agenda, Mayor Tvrdik invited Graydon Peto of 89 Bridgewaters Drive to come up to the mic. He presented his proposed Eagle Scout project, which involves installing approximately seven professionally made metal distance markers at 0.2-mile intervals along the trail at Maria Gatta Community Park. He explained that the markers would assist runners, sports teams, and residents in tracking distances for fitness and recreational purposes, noting that his Shore Regional track team frequently uses the trail. Mr. Peto stated that the markers would be approximately three to four feet tall, installed 18 inches into the ground, and include reflective material for visibility. In response to questions from the Mayor and Council, he reviewed the proposed marker locations and explained that the trail measures approximately one mile, with markers placed every 0.2 miles and beginning/end trail markers at the trail entrances. Members of the Governing Body expressed support for the project and commented that it would be a beneficial addition to the park and community. Following discussion of the proposed Eagle Scout project,

Councilwoman Cooper asked how the project would be funded. Graydon explained that fundraising efforts would include a GoFundMe campaign and that a local sign company had offered to fully sponsor the signs, provide materials, and assist Scouts in learning how the signs are manufactured and installed. Councilwoman Cooper noted that community members are often willing to support Eagle Scout projects and expressed her support for the proposal. Graydon also stated that fellow Scouts and members of the Shore Regional track team had volunteered to assist with the project and earn community service hours. Members of the Governing Body unanimously expressed support for the project, commended the idea, and encouraged Graydon to reach out if assistance was needed. The Mayor and Council wished him success with the project and thanked him for his presentation.

Petition from Burntmill Circle Residents about Possible Street Closure:

Mayor Tvrdek invited representatives from Burnt Mill Circle and Evergreen Lane to discuss a petition regarding traffic and safety concerns associated with a proposed 155-unit age-restricted development in Eatontown. Mike Corsi, 27 Burnt Mill Circle, Ernest Guaimano, 30 Evergreen Lane and Robert Stutz, 42 Burnt Mill Circle explained that Burnt Mill Circle and Evergreen Lane currently function as a cut-through route, resulting in speeding traffic in an area with more than 50 children under the age of 16 and a heavily used neighborhood park. They expressed concern that traffic volumes would increase significantly due to the new development and the growing use of GPS applications directing motorists through the neighborhood. The residents also cited safety concerns at the intersection of Evergreen Lane and Route 71, noting limited visibility and the potential for increased vehicle conflicts. A petition seeking closure of Evergreen Lane at Route 71 was presented, with 33 signatures in support and four opposed from the 49 homes surveyed.

It was discussed that while closing the roadway would create a minor inconvenience for neighborhood residents, they believed the safety benefits outweighed the impact. Council discussion included potential alternatives such as removable gates or bollards to restrict through traffic while maintaining emergency access.

Mayor Tvrdek reported comments received from Police Chief Grimes, who expressed support for the proposal, citing existing speeding complaints, anticipated traffic growth, and the potential to improve neighborhood safety and security by eliminating the cut-through route. Chief Grimes noted that emergency access could be maintained through the use of an emergency access gate if necessary. Fire Chief Lippolis also supported efforts to reduce traffic but recommended additional review to evaluate impacts on emergency vehicle access and response times before any action is taken.

Members of the Governing Body generally expressed support for exploring measures to improve neighborhood safety while ensuring adequate emergency access. Several council members encouraged further outreach to residents who had not yet responded to the petition and suggested additional review of potential traffic and emergency service impacts. Discussion also included the possibility of using removable bollards as a cost-effective alternative to a permanent roadway closure.

CFO Catherine LaPorta, a Burnt Mill Circle resident, spoke in favor of the proposal, noting

that cut-through traffic has been a longstanding concern and recalling prior efforts to address the issue. She stated that neighborhood residents are familiar with the presence of children and typically drive cautiously, whereas non-resident motorists often travel through the area at excessive speeds.

Robert Pepitone of 31 Evergreen Lane also addressed the Council, expressing support for measures to reduce traffic and improve safety. He indicated a willingness to cooperate with any improvements that may require use of a portion of his property and confirmed that GPS applications commonly direct motorists through the neighborhood.

Mayor Tvrdik thanked the residents for their efforts in organizing the petition and advised that the Borough would continue reviewing the request and potential solutions.

Planting Recommendation from Shade Tree Committee - Councilwoman Cooper:

Councilwoman Cooper reported that the Planting and Shade Tree Committee received a donation designated for tree plantings. The Shade Tree Commission recommended planting seven trees at the Community Center near the tennis courts to replace trees previously removed from the area. The donation will cover the cost of the trees and installation, with Shoreview handling the planting and utility mark-outs. Water bags will be installed to assist with maintenance. The committee requested the Governing Body's support for the project and opened the matter for discussion. Krista Newberg, 15 Wyandotte Avenue, Chair of the Shade Tree Commission, clarified the proposed tree locations near the Community Center and tennis courts. She noted that the trees would be deer-protected, staked, and equipped with water bags for irrigation. Ms. Newberg explained that the trees would be planted approximately 25 to 30 feet from the tennis courts to avoid potential impacts to the court surface and surrounding infrastructure.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT - Action Items Only:** There were no comments. Councilman Gallo made the motion to close Public Comment and Councilman Deeran seconded.

8. **Action Items - Consent Agenda :**

Resolution #2026-120 - Payment of Bills:

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

Resolution #2026-121 - Authorizing a Special Event Permit Monmouth Medical 5k:

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

Resolution #2026-122 - Accepting the Resignation of Analis Nunez:

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

Resolution #2026-123 - Authorizing Execution of an MOU with NJ Motor Vehicle Commission:

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

Resolution #2026-124 - Authorizing Sales Tax Certificate 123 Pemberton Ave:

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

Resolution #2026-125 - Authorizing Mayor to Execute Contract for Land Acquisition for Open Space Preservation:

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

Resolution #2026-126 - Authorizing Mayor to Execute a Project Agreement with

Monmouth County for Preservation of Real Property Elkwood Ave:

Resolution #2026-127 - Promoting Gianna Tafuri to Court Administrator:

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

9. First Reading Ordinance:

Ordinance #1123 - Authorizing the Borough to Purchase Block 99 Lot 1 for Open Space Preservation Purposes:

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. New Business: None.

11. Mayor Tvrdik's Report:

Mayor Tvrdik reported that the Borough is pursuing the acquisition of an approximately 4.2-acre waterfront parcel located along the railroad tracks opposite the Bridgewaters complex. He explained that the property has been the subject of development interest for many years and stated that the Borough, in partnership with Monmouth County, intends to pursue its purchase for open space preservation. Mayor Tvrdik noted that the acquisition would increase the Borough's preserved open space holdings to more than 90 acres, nearly doubling the amount preserved over the past two years. He expressed optimism that the property could be preserved for public enjoyment and to prevent over development.

Mayor Tvrdik announced that the Borough's 250th Anniversary Red, White and Blue Party is scheduled for May 14, 2026, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Shrewsbury Sailing and Yacht Club. He reported that the Danjos Band had been confirmed for the event and that food would be provided by Dennis Tofuri of Oceanport. Due to venue capacity limitations, attendance will be limited to the first 100 registrants. Mayor Tvrdik encouraged residents to wear patriotic attire and advised that registration information would be posted on the Borough's social media pages.

Mayor Tvrdik announced that James Leslie had been selected as the Grand Marshal for the Borough's Memorial Day Parade.

Mayor Tvrdik reported receiving an inquiry from Eagle Scout candidate Kyle Stennox seeking ideas for an Eagle Scout project. He noted that another Scout project involving a time capsule for the Borough's 250th Anniversary celebration was already underway and encouraged residents and Historical Committee members to submit additional project ideas. As a possible project, Mayor Tvrdik suggested researching Oceanport veterans who made significant contributions during military service and proposing street dedications in their honor.

In closing, Mayor Tvrdik remarked on the arrival of spring and wished residents a happy and enjoyable season.

12. **Public Comments:** There were no comments from the public. Councilwoman Manna made the motion to close Public Comments and Councilman Keeshen seconded.

13. **Adjournment:**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Kramer
ACTING BOROUGH CLERK