



**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF CLOSTER**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: WEDNESDAY - JUNE 25, 2025

THIS REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE CLOSTER MAYOR AND COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN-PERSON, TELEPHONICALLY, and VIA ZOOM VIDEO. You may join the Zoom meeting, including video, by accessing the information posted in the **Borough Calendar** on the Borough website by visiting www.closterboro.com and clicking the link on the left sidebar for **Calendars and Notice of Meetings** and click on the corresponding date. **To join via Telephone Audio Only:** +1 301-715-8592; **MEETING ID:** 864 2063 3673; **PASSWORD:** 8675309

If Closed Session is required, the Council will retire to a closed session at the conclusion of the Regular Meeting pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 and follow the procedures provided in this statute.

1. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

Mayor Glidden opened the meeting at **8:37 P.M.** with the following announcement: This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, was included in the Notice of 2025 Mayor and Council Meetings which was published in The Record on December 29, 2024 and The Star-Ledger on December 30, 2024, was posted on the Municipal Clerk’s bulletin board and on the Borough website, and has remained posted as the required notices under the Statute. In addition, a copy of the notice is and has been available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk.

2. ROLL CALL

Governing Body	Present	Absent
Mayor Glidden	✓	
Councilwoman Amitai	✓	
Council President Cho	✓	
Councilwoman Chung	✓	
Councilwoman Latner	✓	
Councilwoman Maroules	✓	
Councilman Yammarino	✓	

3. CONSENT AGENDA:

All items with an asterisk (*) are considered to be non-controversial by the Council and will be approved by one motion. There may be further discussion prior to the vote upon request of a Council Member. Also, any item may be removed for further discussion or for Roll Call vote, in which case the item will be removed and considered in its normal sequence as part of the General Order of Business.

RESOLUTIONS: The Mayor read the following. Item 25-172 has been pulled

*25-170 **AUDIT FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTION**

WHEREAS, the Director of the Division of Local Government Services has formally directed all municipalities and counties to adopt a Corrective Action Plan as part of their annual audit process; and

WHEREAS, this Corrective Action Plan shall be submitted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 60 days from receipt of the annual audit and it shall be kept on file with the Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, this plan shall cover all audit findings and recommendations as well as the status of prior year findings and recommendations and be prepared in accordance with the Single Audit Act, Federal and State Office of Budget Management Circulars and applicable Local Finance Notices,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter hereby approve the below Corrective Action Plan for the 2024 Audit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of Local Government Services.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

***Finding 2024-1 and 2023-1**

Recommended by Auditor:

All payroll cash receipts and cash disbursements relating to Other Trust Fund be recorded in the Borough's accounting system.

Corrective Action Plan:

The CFO and the Finance department will work together to ensure Other Trust Fund accounts are entered into the Borough's financial software system.

Implementation Date: November 2025

Finding 2024-2 and 2023-2

Recommendation by Auditor:

The Borough updates its fixed asset records annually. In addition, consideration be given to integrate the fixed asset records with the financial accounting system.

Corrective Action Plan:

The Borough Administrator and CFO will seek to retain an employee to integrate the fixed assets into the financial software program which will then update the fixed assets records on a regular basis but no less than annually.

Implementation Date: October 2025

Finding 2024-3 and 2023-3

Recommendation by Auditor:

Procedures be reviewed and enhanced to ensure that sufficient budget appropriations are available prior to the expenditure of funds.

Corrective Action Plan:

The Assistant CFO will enable and enhance stricter parameters into the accounting system to ensure expenditures do not exceed the budget appropriations.

Implementation Date: August 2025

Finding 2024-4

Recommendation by Auditor

It is recommended that documentation supporting the use of national cooperative contracts be retained by the Borough and made available for audit.

Corrective Action Plan:

The Purchasing Agent will maintain a file with the supporting documentation of costs included in national cooperative contracts.

Implementation Date: August 2025

*25-171 APPROVING ADDITIONAL HOURS FOR PLUMBING SUBCODE OFFICIAL - GIUSEPPE LAMASTRA

WHEREAS, Giuseppe LaMastra has been appointed Plumbing Subcode Official, and

WHEREAS, there is a need to increase the hours of the Plumbing Subcode Official due to increased workload, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor & Council approve 5 additional hours per week as needed to be paid by voucher, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk shall provide a certified copy of this Resolution to the Finance Office.

*25-172 AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF FULL TIME FINANCE CLERK – ALEXANDER MAILANDER- Tabled

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter are aware of the need for a Full Time Finance Clerk in the Borough's Tax/Finance Department; and

WHEREAS, Borough of Closter's Borough Administrator and Tax Collector has reviewed the qualifications and recommended the hiring of an individual to the following position effective **July 1, 2025**; and

Alexander Mailander – Full-Time Finance Clerk

WHEREAS, Alexander Mailander will start at a salary of \$55,000 plus conditions awarded in Closter's Personal Manual; and

WHEREAS, Alexander Mailander will have a three-month Probationary period, whereupon a satisfactory competition will be awarded \$5,000.00 additional compensation.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council are hereby authorizing the hiring of **Alexander Mailander**—a full-time Finance Clerk. The hire will be effective on **July 1, 2025**; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Clerk shall provide a certified copy of this Resolution to the Finance Office.

*25-173 DISABLED VETERAN EXEMPTION OF PROPERTY TAX – SAMUEL YOO

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 54:4-3.30A allows for exemption from taxation from property for any citizens and resident of the State who has a disability as defined by this statute; and

WHEREAS, the property located at 98 Birch Street known as Block 603, Lot 7 as set forth on the official tax map of the Borough of Closter; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Yoo, the owner of said property, has filed the Dwelling of Disabled Veteran and received approval from the Department of Veterans Affairs as of June 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Tax Assessor has granted full Veteran's exemption status, effective June 1, 2025, to the property owner of 98 Birch Street known as Block 603, Lot 7, Samuel Yoo.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter here by approves that the Tax Collector be authorized to cancel the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters of taxes and refund partial amount on the 2nd quarter in the amount of \$1,500.24 on said property as of June 1, 2025.

*25-174 CALLING FOR RESTORATION OF ENERGY TAXES TO MUNICIPALITIES

WHEREAS, taxes on gas and electric utilities were originally collected by the host municipalities to be used for local purposes and to compensate the public for the use of their rights of way; and

WHEREAS, when the State made itself the collection agent for these taxes, it promised to dedicate the proceeds to municipal property tax relief; since, just as municipalities collect property taxes for the benefit of school districts, counties and other entities; the State is supposed to collect Energy Taxes for the benefit of municipal governments; and

WHEREAS, for years State budget makers have diverted funding from Energy Taxes to fund State programs; and instead of being spent on local programs and services and used to offset property taxes, the money has been spent as successive Legislatures and Administrations have seen fit; and

WHEREAS, while the State may need to have the right to override the statutory dedication of these revenues to local governments, in order to deal with emergencies and crises that may occur; current State policymakers should not exercise that right automatically; and

WHEREAS, while that right should be the exception, it has become the rule; and

WHEREAS, in SFY 2023, the State did provide some much-needed relief in the allocation of \$75 million of new funds identified as the Municipal Relief Fund; and

WHEREAS, in SFY 2024, the State allocated \$150 million in Municipal Relief Funds, however, in SFY 2025 and, as proposed in SFY 2026, no allocation will exist; and

WHEREAS, in SFY 2024 the Energy Tax Receipts Program should have received over \$350 million to restore municipalities back to 2008 levels, however, the State's diversion of Energy Taxes has continued to grow causing more of a financial gap; and

WHEREAS, the cumulative impact of years of flat funding and underfunding has left many municipalities with serious needs and burdensome property taxes; and

WHEREAS, local elected officials are in the best position to decide the best use of these resources, which were always intended to fund local programs and services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Closter, in the County of Bergen calls for the immediate restoration of funding diverted from Energy Taxes intended for local use; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we, respectfully, call on State policy makers to end the diversion of our

municipal resources to cover State spending and to provide us with this important tool to relieve the worst-in-the-nation property tax burden borne, for too long, by the people of New Jersey; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution is forwarded to Senator Holly Schepisi, Assemblymembers Robert Auth and John V. Azzariti, Senate President Nicholas Scutari, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way, the Governor of the State of New Jersey Phil Murphy, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

*25-175 WAIVING SIDEWALK REQUIREMENT FOR THE PROPERTY – 52 RYERSON PLACE

WHEREAS, the owners of the property located at 52 Ryerson Place, Shahar and Miri Greenberg, requested a waiver of the Borough's sidewalk requirement pursuant to Closter Code Section 171- 29A(2); and

WHEREAS, the property owner forwarded documentation to the Mayor and Council stating that the neighboring properties on their side of Ryerson do not have sidewalks and their lot is corner lot which terminates at a wooded area; and

WHEREAS, the property owner appeared before the Governing Body at the Council meeting held on June 11, 2025; and

WHEREAS, in exchange for the waiver, the property owner shall be required to make a \$3,600.00 contribution to the Borough's sidewalk fund, pursuant to calculations made by the Borough Engineer; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer reviewed the documentation in this matter and recommends that the sidewalk waiver be granted, subject to the \$3,600.00 contribution to the sidewalk fund, and further recommends that the property owner install full curb across the entire frontage of the property including the driveway.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter that the Borough's sidewalk requirement for the property located at 52 Ryerson Place is hereby waived subject to:

1. The property owner shall make a contribution of \$3,600.00 to the Borough's sidewalk fund; and
2. The property owner shall install full curb across the entire frontage of the property including the driveway.

*25-176 APPROVAL TO SUBMIT GRANT APPLICATION & EXECUTE GRANT CONTRACT WITH NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS – WALKER AVENUE PROJECT

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter formally approves the grant application for the above stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as MA-2026- Improvements Walker Avenue - 00254 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of the Borough of Closter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the Borough of Closter and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

Certified as a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Council On this day 25th of June of 2025.

My signature and the Clerk's seal serve to acknowledge the above resolution and constitute acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approve the execution of the grant agreement as authorized by the resolution above.

*25-177 INTENT TO FUND ANY SHORTFALLS IN ROUND FOUR MUNICIPALLY SPONSORED AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2024, Governor Murphy signed into law P.L. 2024, c.2, an Amendment to the 1985 Fair Housing Act (hereinafter "Amended FHA" or "Act"); and

WHEREAS, the Report issued by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on October 18, 2024 pursuant to this law calculated Closter's Round Four (2025-2035) fair share affordable obligations as follows: a Present Need (Rehabilitation) Obligation of 16 and a Prospective Need (New Construction) Obligation of 251; and

WHEREAS, P.L. 2024, c.2, modified the process upon which municipalities could comply with their affordable housing obligations pursuant to the Mount Laurel doctrine and, in accordance with the law the Borough filed a Declaratory Judgment Complaint with the Court to contest the DCA calculations, In the Matter of the Application of the Borough of Closter, Docket No. BER- L-00549-25; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Builders Association ("NJBA") filed an objection to the Borough's Complaint; thereafter the parties engaged in good faith negotiations and, as a result of those negotiations, the Borough and NJBA agreed to a Round Four rehabilitation obligation of 16 units and a new construction obligation of 241 units for the Borough; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2025, the Borough passed a Resolution to bind itself to a Round Four rehabilitation obligation of 16 units and a new construction obligation of 241 units; and

WHEREAS, Directive 14-24 of the Administrative Office of the Courts requires that municipalities adopt a resolution of intent to fund, by bonding if necessary, for any shortfall in Round Four municipally-sponsored affordable housing projects and rehabilitation programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter that the Borough hereby intends to fund, by bonding if necessary, for any shortfall in Round Four municipally-sponsored affordable housing projects and rehabilitation programs.

***25-178 APPROVING RELEASE OF TREE BOND ESCROW – 91 PIERMONT ROAD**

WHEREAS, all applicable Borough professionals have finalized inspections on improvements made and approve the release of bond and/or escrow funds to the depositor of monies as indicated in the attached Project Detail Inquiry for 93 Piermont Road.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter that the Finance Clerk is and hereby authorized to release the bond and escrow monies to the depositor as indicated in the attached Project Detail Inquiry in the amount of \$1,500.00.

Account #: 2010057305 Amount: \$1,500.00 Owner: Ileshkumar & Urmi Patel

***25-179 AUTHORIZING RENEWAL OF 2025 TO 2026 LIQUOR LICENSES**

WHEREAS, applications have been filed for the renewal of certain liquor licenses for the sales and consumption of alcoholic beverages pursuant N.J.S.A 33:1-1 et seq. for the term of one (1) year commencing July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the following licenses for the sale and consumption of alcohol beverages are hereby approved and authorized:

PLENARY CONSUMPTION LICENSE

0207-33-005-006	HOOT TWO, LLC t/a Bareburger 129 Vervalen Street	\$2,500.00
0207-33-006-012	Closter Cinema Beverage, LLC dba/Landmark Closter Plaza 130 Ver Valen Street	\$2,500.00
0207-33-007-010	S and R LIQUOR t/a The Hill 252 Schraalenburgh Road	\$2,500.00
0207-33-009-015	STERN & BOW, LLC t/a Stern & Bow 171 Schraanlenburgh Road	\$2,500.00
0207-33-002-007	Bellanick and Han LLC t/a Lucio's 208 Piermont Road	\$2,500.00

INACTIVE/POCKET LICENSE

0207-33-012-007	Hasim E. Sujak	\$2,500.00
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COUNCILMEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Councilwoman Amitai			✓			
Councilman Cho			✓			
Councilwoman Chung		✓	✓			
Councilwoman Latner	✓		✓			
Councilwoman Maroules			✓			
Councilman Yammarino			✓			

On the matter of adopting the following resolutions adopted by the County: 70-25 Gun Violence Awareness Month, 71-25 LGBTQ Pride Month, 72-25 Adopt a Shelter Cat Month, and 73-25 Elder Abuse Awareness Month

COUNCILMEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Councilwoman Amitai			✓			
Councilman Cho			✓			
Councilwoman Chung			✓			
Councilwoman Latner	✓		✓			
Councilwoman Maroules			✓			
Councilman Yammarino		✓	✓			

4. **OPEN MEETING TO PUBLIC FOR ANY MATTER** (5-minute limit)

No one wished to speak.

Vote to go into Closed Session for Potential Litigation and Attorney-Client Privilege.

COUNCILMEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Councilwoman Amitai			✓			
Councilman Cho			✓			
Councilwoman Chung			✓			
Councilwoman Latner	✓		✓			
Councilwoman Maroules			✓			
Councilman Yammarino		✓	✓			

Vote to return to Open Session.

COUNCILMEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Councilwoman Amitai			✓			
Councilman Cho			✓			
Councilwoman Chung			✓			
Councilwoman Latner		✓	✓			
Councilwoman Maroules			✓			
Councilman Yammarino	✓		✓			

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

COUNCILMEMBER	MOTION	SECOND	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Councilwoman Amitai			✓			
Councilman Cho			✓			
Councilwoman Chung			✓			
Councilwoman Latner		✓	✓			
Councilwoman Maroules			✓			
Council President Yammarino	✓		✓			

The Regular Meeting adjourned at **8:40 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Margiotta, RMC, CMR
 Borough Clerk