



**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF CLOSTER**

WORK SESSION MINUTES: WEDNESDAY – NOVEMBER 13, 2024

THIS REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE CLOSTER MAYOR AND COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN-PERSON, TELEPHONICALLY, and VIA ZOOM VIDEO. You may join 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: TOLL FREE: +1 646-558-8656; MEETING ID: 864 2063 3673; PASSWORD: 8675309

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
2. **OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT**

Mayor Glidden opened the meeting at 7:00 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 2024 Mayor and Council Meetings which was published in The Record and The Star Ledger on December 29, 2023, 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.

3. **ROLL CALL**

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

4. **ORDINANCES**

ADOPTION:

- a. **ORDINANCE NO. 2024:1346, "AN ORDINANCE TO RELEASE, VACATE AND EXTINGUISH ANY AND ALL PUBLIC RIGHTS IN AND TO A PORTION OF WILSON PLACE"**

The meeting was opened to the public. Steve Isaacson asked whether the purchaser's taxes would increase immediately. Borough Administrator James Winters shared that the tax map had been correct all along and that he believed the individual had been paying the increased taxes already. The meeting was closed to the public. The vote will be taken in the Regular Meeting.

INTRODUCTION:

- a. **ORDINANCE NO. 2024:1347**
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 200, "ZONING", ARTICLE III, DEFINITIONS AND WORD USAGE AND ARTICLE VI, DISTRICT NO. 3, BUSINESS AREA
- b. **ORDINANCE NO. 2024:1348**
AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FUNDING FOR ENGINEERING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION SERVICES FOR THE 2025 ROAD PROGRAM FOR THE BOROUGH OF CLOSTER AND APPROPRIATING \$120,000.00 FOR SUCH PURPOSE.
- c. **ORDINANCE NO. 2024:1349**
AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$536,500.00 FROM OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND FOR PARK, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION IMPROVEMENTS

5. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF COMMUNICATION ITEMS

- a. MAIL LIST of October 25, 2024: Mayor Glidden spoke about the State instituting a drought and water warning. A watering ban is likely on the way.
- b. MAIL LIST of November 1, 2024
- c. MAIL LIST of November 8, 2024

6. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR MEETING

- *24-256 AUTHORIZING TAX REFUND AND CANCELLATION OF TAXES FOR FIRST AND SECOND QUARTERS OF 2025 FOR DISABLED VETERAN
- *24-257 APPROVAL OF MAHBOBI V CLOSTER BOROUGH TAX APPEAL SETTLEMENT
- *24-258 APPROVAL OF KOLEFAS V CLOSTER BOROUGH TAX APPEAL SETTLEMENT
- *24-259 APPROVAL OF HONG V CLOSTER BOROUGH TAX APPEAL SETTLEMENT
- *24-260 APPROVAL OF FRIES V CLOSTER BOROUGH TAX APPEAL SETTLEMENT
- *24-261 APPROVAL OF LEE V CLOSTER BOROUGH TAX APPEAL SETTLEMENT
- *24-262 CANCEL BALANCE FOR BOND ORDINANCE
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- *24-273 RETURN EQUIPMENT NO LONGER NEEDED BY BOROUGH
- *24-274 APPROVING CONTRACT WITH CHIEF OF POLICE
- *24-275 ESCHEAT FUNDS
- *24-276 BILLS LIST
- *24-277 AWARDING A "FAIR AND OPEN" CONTRACT FOR LANDSCAPING SERVICES IN EXCHANGE FOR LEAF COMPOST MATERIALS
- *24-278 AWARDING A LEASE FOR PORTION OF WELLINGTON AVENUE IN THE BOROUGH OF CLOSTER
- *24-279 AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE LEASE OPTION AGREEMENT REGARDING THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

Councilman Yammarino spoke about Resolution 24-256, as he felt it was a great resolution, and asked whether the Federal Government would reimburse the Borough. He was told the Federal Government would not.

7. PROFESSIONAL REPORTS

- a. **BOROUGH ENGINEER:** The quest continues to reach the homeowner of the very small piece of property needed to make the Piermont Road and Ver Valen Street intersection safer. Borough Administrator James Winters has contacted the owner's attorney several times and will soon have to investigate eminent domain. The revised report regarding the Closter Swim Club will go to the Environmental Protection Agency tomorrow. The Homans Avenue stream cleaning will be done by the end of this week. The stormwater survey was approved by the Department of Environmental Protection. Many of the 2024 Local Aid projects have been completed. The Department of Environmental Protection permit has been secured for the Ruckman Pond bank stabilization. 2025 Roads project was authorized today. The proposal for the bridge near the memorial should be ready soon. The grant money is in place but the paperwork and review have to be done.
- b. **BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR:** There was a meeting with the fireworks company recently to straighten out any issues before next year. There will likely be a resolution to go out to bid later this month for pole barns. Veolia worked on a lead assessment program. Phase 2 will be to replace the lead pipes. There does not seem to be an extensive number of them in Closter. The budget work has begun. Borough IT Director Kevin Whitney secured a contract for WiFi in the Ruckman Park field, and the first step will be to get cameras in place. Red Flag conditions have been in place due to the fires. The drought has gone from a watch to a warning.
- c. **POLICE CHIEF:** The police have been working with the Closter Plaza to improve security. Borough Clerk Mari J. Margiotta did a tremendous job with the recent election as everything went smoothly. The police officers will participate in no-shave November and donate a certain amount of money for every month they go without shaving. There will be toy collection boxes throughout town. The 5000 police phone number was spoofed and there were a couple of victims. Chief of Police James Buccola reminded everyone that the Police Department will not make calls asking for money. A paving company was traveling about looking for work. The company was licensed

but did shoddy work and did not have residents secure permits. The Veterans Service was held this past Monday. The Police Department will create a way for younger veterans to be identified and invited for service next year.

D. MAYOR: Congratulations to Councilwomen Latner and Chung for their re-election. The ribbon cutting was held at the pickleball courts and was well attended. The contractor did a very good job. On November 16, 2024 at 3:30 P.M. there will be a 5-business ribbon cutting at Closter Plaza. Additionally on Saturday, the Recreation Department will hold a sports equipment donation event at 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. There will be a dinner at the convention in Atlantic City. Councilwoman Latner will send information.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Councilwoman Latner spoke about the Library's news literacy program that is worthy of attention. The play *Clue* will be at the Northern Valley Regional High School at Demarest on November 14-16, 2024. The free show for seniors is on November 13, 2024. Borough Clerk Mari J. Margiotta thanked everyone for their part in the election.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Councilwoman Chung shared that there is an opening on the Board of Education due to a resignation. The deadline is soon for applications, followed by interviews. Residents are encouraged to apply, but not from the Governing Body. Councilman Cho and Councilwoman Latner spoke about where Chabad of Closter could have their menorah lighting. Borough Administrator James Winters suggested perhaps it could be near the Senior Center and use part of the parking lot, as it will occur in the evening.

10. OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS (5-MINUTE LIMIT)

Libby spoke about anti-Semitic incidents in the school and in the town. Chief of Police James Buccola shared how they were being dealt with. Mayor Glidden stated that the Mayor and Council would not stand for this behavior, and the individuals would be appropriately punished.

Steve Blechman spoke about early voting and thanked Borough Clerk Mari J. Margiotta for her phenomenal job. He congratulated the winner and the council on their stipend and asked who is now doing the work Councilman Devlin and Councilwoman Witko did to bring money into the town. Mayor Glidden spoke about the grant process.

Steve Isaacson (97 Columbus Avenue) congratulated the incumbents. He suggested chartering a bus and giving tours to new residents, occurring every 3-4 months. The cost including insurance is \$400. He also suggested storytelling by John MacAffrey at MacBain Farm. He asked that Chief of Police James Buccola's agreement be made public. He asked why the \$12 million in bonds were canceled and why the MacBain Farmhouse is not being repaired. He commended Borough Clerk Mari J. Margiotta for the detailed agendas. He asked why money was paid to the Borough of Montvale and if it had to do with the COAH lawsuit. He also asked about two large checks that were written for athletic instruction and why the coaches are not paying for this. Borough Administrator James Winters explained that the money being paid for athletic instruction came from team fees, not from the taxpayers. Mr. Isaacson asked what kind of landscaping service Victoria's Nursery is getting in return for mulch. Borough Administrator James Winters stated that the mulch issue was bid on and that there was one bidder. He asked why two resolutions concerning the Village School are after the Closed Session. Mayor Glidden stated that there was negotiation having to do with the Village School contractor and that it has to be done in a timely manner. Mayor Glidden liked the welcome ideas. Borough Administrator James Winters confirmed that the money to the Borough of Montvale was for the COAH lawsuit.

Jeanne Stella (479 High Street) congratulated the Councilwomen. She also said that she has been working at MacBain Farm with the Valley Program and that a lot of food is being picked for the food banks. Garlic was planted on Saturday with the Brownies Girl Scouts troop. She understands work on the house needs to be done and soon, but knows that things have been intense. She added that the roof is not historic.

Todd Bradbury (292 West Street) shared that there is a program called Lights Down, Stars Up coming to the

Closter Nature Center on November 22, 2024. He asked people to attend. He also spoke about the poison hemlock and his hopes for a plan in the spring. The Shade Tree Commission is enjoying its relationship with the Department of Public Works and would like to set up a meeting with several groups.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

The Work Session adjourned at **8:02 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,


Mari J. Margiotta, RMC, CMR
Borough Clerk

Date of Minutes approval: April 9, 2025