



**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF CLOSTER**

WORK SESSION MINUTES: WEDNESDAY - June 11, 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

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

Mayor Glidden called the meeting to order 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 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.

3. ROLL CALL

| GOVERNING BODY | PRESENT | ABSENT |
|-----------------------------|---------|--------|
| Mayor Glidden | ✓ | |
| Councilwoman Amitai | ✓ | |
| Councilman Cho | ✓ | |
| Councilwoman Chung | | ✓ |
| Councilwoman Latner | ✓ | |
| Councilwoman Maroules | ✓ | |
| Council President Yammarino | ✓ | |

4. PRESENTATION

Cubmaster Andrew Correa-moved to after the Proclamation, as the Cubmaster had not yet arrived. Mr. Carrea spoke about the desire to organize a touch truck and pushcart derby at the Closter Plaza on Sunday September 14, 1-3, with a rain date two Sundays later. Councilwoman Latner suggested writing up something for the Mayor's newsletter. Mr. Correa invited the Mayor and Council to be involved in the event as racers.

5. PROCLAMATION

Appreciation of Public Service – Donald W. Winters. The Mayor read the proclamation honoring Mr. Winters for volunteerism to Closter, service to his Country, and local work as a crossing guard.

6. MINUTES APPROVAL

- a. Sine Die and Reorganization Meeting Minutes of January 2, 2025
- b. Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2025
- c. Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2025
- d. Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2025

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

7. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF COMMUNICATION ITEMS:

- a. Mail List of May 30, 2025, Councilwoman Latner spoke about Items # 3 and 6, a request for tree removal that has been taken care of and the Library Trustees' appreciation to Leslie Weatherly for trying to obtain a grant.
- b. Mail List of June 6, 2025, The Mayor spoke about Item #1, the treasury's sounding an alarm on the State Health Benefits Plan. The Mayor will sit on a task force tomorrow to discuss. Discussion. Councilwoman Amitai asked about the item having to do with the Master Plan, and the Mayor explained.

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

- *25-157 AUTHORIZING RENEWAL OF 2025-2026 LIQUOR LICENSES
- *25-158 PARTICIPATE IN THE US ARMY CEREMONIAL RIFLE PROGRAM
- *25-159 DENYING THE REQUEST FOR A WAIVER OF THE SIDEWALK REQUIREMENT OF THE CLOSTER CODE FOR THE PROPERTY AT 63 HARRINGTON AVENUE
- *25-160 TRANSFERRING UNEXPENDED BALANCES FROM 2024 APPROPRIATION RESERVE
- *25-161 APPROVING THE AMENDMENT AND SUBMISSION OF THE 2025-2029 COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CFMP) DATED
- *25-162 GOVERNING BODY CERTIFICATION OF 2024 AUDIT
- *25-163 APPOINTING AN ACTING ZONING OFFICER – JOSEPH SCOTT JEZEQUEL
- *25-164 BILLS LIST
- *25-165 FIXING BASE SALARIES FOR 2025
- *25-166 AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT WITH BOSWELL ENGINEERING TO PROVIDE ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE HIGH STREET & KNICKERBOCKER ROAD SIGNAL

- *25-167 SUPPORTS "OLDER AMERICANS MONTH" IN NEW JERSEY
- *25-168 SUPPORTS ASIAN AMERICAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, AND PACIFIC ISLANDER MONTH (AAPI)

No one wished to pull any items for discussion.

9. PROFESSIONAL REPORTS

a. **BOROUGH CLERK** – Mari J. Margiotta, Borough Clerk thanked everyone for the good work yesterday at the Primary. The turnout was about 11.5%, which is about average. The office has processed 194 OPRAs to date this year. Liquor license renewals are in process. Councilman Yammarino asked about OPRAs and about the time spent was a burden put on the office. Ms. Margiotta replied that OPRA laws changed in September 2024 and that the Clerk's Office will always abide by the law regarding OPRAs. She continued that some OPRAs do entail a lot of time.

b. **BOROUGH ENGINEER** The written report was submitted. The engineer gave a brief overview.

c. **BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR** The pole barns are rising. The concrete floors are in process. There is a vacancy in the finance clerk position. The Zoning Officer has resigned. A temporary Zoning Officer will be appointed. The Administrator and Police Department, along with the Engineer's office, are working on a solution to the bus stop problem on Schraalenburgh Road. Discussions are underway about using the church's parking lot Monday to Friday, adding a crosswalk, and concrete ramps. County approval would be needed.

d. **CHIEF OF POLICE** The letter that was sent has not gotten a response. The meeting with Closter Plaza was productive. There will be a meeting with the engineer about traffic patterns. Signs will be added urging drivers not to block traffic. Knickerbocker and High Street: the utility work will begin at the Harrington Park side and move toward the High School. The hope is that the traffic light work can coordinate with this work. Headway seems to have happened regarding the food truck on Herbert Avenue. The property owner cleared an area of vegetation and put down gravel to make it safer. Discussion about whether the truck is still there. The situation on Blanch Avenue seems to be improving in conjunction with the DPW cleaning and signs being put up. The trucks are parking at the church when they need to wait instead of on the street. The Police Chief expects to bring a resolution later in the month concerning a program in which mental health practitioners and Police working together. The Borough Engineer asked for a week's notice when PSE&G starts its work.

The Mayor shared that the Lions Club Duck Derby this past weekend was very successful. The Kayak race was also last weekend. There were four teams; the Closter team was Steve Rolland from the Ethics Commission, Ross Herbert, Joe Talbo from the Fire Department, and Brian Kelly from the Police Department. Closter won. There is a new exhibit at the Museum. MacBain Farm is open this weekend for strolling. The Nature Center is having music by the pond this weekend. This Friday is the first concert at the Bandshell of the season. The Village School is on the HMFA agenda for tomorrow.

10. HAWKERS AND PEDDLERS LICENSE

HP 2025-09 Aptive Environmental LLC – Sebastian Narvaez

No one had questions.

11. APPOINTMENT BY MAYOR

Historical Preservation Commission

Francesca Costa Alternate No. 2 2 Years Unexpired Term Ending 12/31/2025

This will be handled in the Regular Meeting.

12. OLD BUSINESS

The Library Book Sale is this Saturday. The Library will be closed for Juneteenth. Thanks to Jeanne Stella for her help with the Pride Flag Raising. When the Seniors heard about it they offered to fly the Pride Flag at the Senior Center for the rest of the month. The Council needs to approve it before it can be done. They will be asked to also fly an American flag. Next year they would be willing to have the Pride Flag Raising there. Councilwoman Latner suggested perhaps other flags could be hung there too, flags that are of inclusion and have been approved by the Council. Councilwoman Amitai said that the American flag should come first and then another flag perhaps below that. Councilwoman Latner moved to approve the Pride flag's hanging there. Councilwoman Maroules asked to hold off until the next meeting, as it sets a precedent. Councilwoman Latner withdrew her motion upon request and will make it again at the Regular Meeting.

Councilwoman Amitai asked whether an extension has been received for Affordable Housing. The response was that an extension was doubtful. An email came in for the Council at about 5:00 with a favorable decision for Closter. The Mayor will circulate the email. Councilwoman asked about the unkempt status of Topside Restaurant. The Administrator will check with the Code Enforcer. Councilwoman Amitai read a letter concerning the effort to obtain a grant concerning deer maintenance. The letter had to do with the damage the deer are doing. Councilwoman Amitai suggested that the issue be put on the ballot. The Administrator and Councilwoman Latner reinforced that it would need to be done on a regional basis. Discussion. The Mayor would like to organize a task force with other towns. This issue was discussed at the Bergen County League of Municipalities meeting.

13. NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Yammarino asked about the parking at the Library parking on election day and asked if employees could be asked to park in the other lot to make it easier for voters to park. He also asked why two Library employees have reserved parking spots instead of residents being able to park there. The lot is managed by the Library. Councilwoman Latner will have a conversation at the next Library Board meeting.

14. OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS (5 MINUTE LIMIT)

Todd Bradbury (292 West Street) thanked the Mayor for the Shade Tree Committee meeting.

Brian Pfeiffer (158 Demarest Avenue) asked whether there was any thought of putting up bus shelters on Schraalenburgh. The Administrator said that it is being reviewed and that he is not sure how much space there is.

Kathy Leieo (92 Blanch Avenue) spoke about her safety concerns, especially with the landscaping trucks that are often parked on the other side. She is afraid that accidents will happen. The Police Chief is working on this. She also said that trucks are idling in the streets for a long time. She said that street is now like a commercial street and asked if the hours could be regulated. The Mayor said that the Borough is supportive of the residents and that the Police Chief goes there every day. Signs are being put up. It will take a while to resolve this issue.

Irene Fonesa (100 Blanch Avenue) showed pictures to show that forklifts were going up and down Blanch without a license, a man urinated on her property, and a delivery was made after hours. The Police Chief said that the business owner was allowed to have deliveries made after hours. She left a copy of a letter she wrote to the Zoning Board concerning Victoria's.

Steve Isaacson (97 Columbus) asked whether the Lupardi's land was zoned commercial. The response was that

Lupardi's was a farm and that this was an issue for the Tax Assessor. He said that a little bit of mulch was delivered to MacBain. He asked why the farm is not getting what it needs. He said that the County installs bus stops for free. He suggested asking that a temporary commuter lot be put in on Schraalenburgh and Old Hook. He read a story about expensive sales in Bergen County. 19 Wilson Place sold for \$3.3 million. They are paying \$17,000 in taxes. He suggested allowing builders to have 3 months at the old rate and then undergo a reassessment at 3, 6, 9 months. The response was that the current system is statutory but that added assessments can be retroactive. He suggested that the Bergen County League of Municipalities begin a pool for insurance. He said that he's having a craniotomy next week.

Al Fonesa (100 Blanch Avenue) asked about the committee concerning Blanch Avenue. The Mayor said that the committee is the Mayor, the Administrator, and the Chief of Police. Mr. Fonesa would like to be involved. He asked for the speed limit on Blanch Avenue (it is 25). He suggested it be lowered to 15. He also asked whether the speeding issues have been looked at. The Chief said that he goes to the site 5 days a week and it is very busy. The Chief said that a tremendous amount of manhours are dedicated to the site and that signs are being put up but that it will take time. Mr. Fonesa spoke about the OPRA requests he has made. He suggested that some had not been completed. The Clerk stated that all requests have been completed but that if there are no records they cannot be produced. The Engineer suggested that perhaps what Mr. Fonesa wants to do is appeal the "continued use" that Victoria's is allowed to operate under. Mr. Fonesa asked for help and said that Victoria's is not a farm.

A resident spoke about the need for sidewalks. He wrote a letter dated June 11, that has not yet been duly reviewed. The Mayor said that this can be discussed at the next meeting. He suggested that the called call a few days before the meeting to ask that it be put on the agenda.

Jeanne Stella (479 High Street) said that there is an American Flag on one of the two flagpoles. Councilwoman Amitai asked whether the American flag could be flown above the Pride flag. Jeanne Stella did not see that as an issue.

Linda Albelli, Director of Senior Center was on via Zoom and wanted to speak, but had technical difficulties.

15. CLOSED SESSION – AFTER REGULAR MEETING

*25-169 CLOSED SESSION – JUNE 11, 2025

16. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at **8:44 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,


Mari J. Margiotta, RMC, CMR
Borough Clerk

