



MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF CLOSTER

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES: WEDNESDAY - JULY 9, 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 7:50 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		✓
Councilman Cho * Via Zoom	✓	
Councilwoman Chung	✓	
Councilwoman Latner	✓	
Councilwoman Maroules	✓	
Council President Yammarino	✓	

3. ORDINANCES:

INTRODUCTION:

a. ORDINANCE NO. 2025:1365

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A DEED OF EASEMENT FOR ROADWAY PURPOSES ON BLOCK 1316, LOT 9, COMMONLY KNOW AS 511 DURIE AVENUE, BETWEEN THE BOROUGH OF CLOSTER AND COUNTY OF BERGEN

WHEREAS, the County of Bergen has requested an Easement over a portion of Block 1316, Lot 9, commonly known as 511 Durie Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has agreed to grant the aforementioned Easement; and

WHEREAS, a Deed of Easement for Roadway Purposes has been prepared by the Bergen County Counsel's office and is attached hereto as **EXHIBIT A**.

WHEREAS, the Easement is more fully described in the metes and bounds description prepared by Hubschman Engineering, dated October 21, 2024, entitled "Easement Description" and as shown on a plan entitled "County Road Widening Easement" dated 10/21/2024, both of which are attached to the Deed of Easement for Roadway Purposes as Exhibits A & B.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Body of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1.

The Easement, as defined in the preamble to this Ordinance, is hereby granted by the Borough.

SECTION 2.

The Mayor and Borough Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the Deed of Easement for Roadway Purposes attached hereto as **EXHIBIT A** and any and all other documents necessary to effectuate the intent and purposes hereof.

SECTION 3.

The Clerk shall return the partially executed Deed to William Brown, Esq, at the County of Bergen, Office of County Counsel, for execution and recording.

SECTION 4.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistencies.

SECTION 5.

If any article, section, subsection, paragraph, phrase or sentence is, for any reason, held to be unconstitutional or invalid, said article, section, subsection, paragraph, phrase or sentence shall be deemed severable.

SECTION 6.

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon final publication as provided by law.

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

4. 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:

*25-182 **BILLS LIST**

WHEREAS, the claims listed below have been authorized and approved by the Chairman of the Committee, examined by the Finance Committee, and found correct.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council hereby authorize the payment of these claims, and that warrants be drawn therefore when funds are available.

Budgeted	Amount
Bergen County Tax	\$ 0.00
County Open Space Tax	\$ 0.00
Northern Valley High School	\$ 0.00
Closter Board of Education	\$ 1,913,988.00
2024 Budget Appropriations	\$ 93,144.87
2025 Budget Appropriations – Operating Expenses	\$ 101,930.80
Payroll 06/15/2025	\$ 330,109.38
Payroll 06/30/2025	\$ 341,702.28
Current Treasury Account June 12, 2025 to July 09, 2025	\$ 2,780,875.33

Capital and Trust	Amount
Capital	\$ 1,222,404.68
Escrow Trust	\$ 13,522.67
Recreation	\$ 82,819.83

Capital and Trust	Amount
Animal	\$ 356.00
Housing Trust	\$ 12,492.96
Food Locker	\$ 0.00
Open Space	\$ 0.00
HRA Insurance	\$ 0.00

*25-183 CONSENTING TO BERGEN COUNTY CHANGING SPEED LIMIT ON KNICKERBOCKER ROAD TO 35 MPH FROM 40 MPH

WHEREAS, Bergen County has placed a speed limit on Knickerbocker Road at 40 mph on April 15, 1985, and

WHEREAS, due to recent accidents and other motor vehicle issues the Closter Police Department asked the Bergen County Department of Planning and Engineering to re-evaluate the safety conditions on Knickerbocker Road within Closter, and

WHEREAS, The Bergen County Department of Planning and Engineering conducted a survey of the conditions in September 2024, and

WHEREAS, The Bergen County Department of Planning and Engineering is recommending to the Bergen County Board of Commissioners that the speed limit on Knickerbocker Road to change to 35 MPH, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough of Closter that the governing body hereby consents to the speed limit on Knickerbocker Road to be changed to 35 MPH.

*25-184 AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AMENDMENT TO SAVATREE CONTRACT FOR COMPOSTING AND RELATED

WHEREAS, effective April 25, 2025, the Borough of Closter and SavATree, LLC entered into a contract for Composting and Related Services; and

WHEREAS, the Bid Specifications for the project, state that the “Contract Term” shall be for three years following April 25, 2025 with the option to renew for two additional one year periods thereafter; and

WHEREAS, the contract executed by the parties did not include the aforementioned “Contract Term” and the parties are desirous of an amendment to the Contract to address this issue.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey as follows:

The Borough Attorney is hereby authorized to prepare an Amendment to the Contract between the Borough of Closter and SavATree, LLC for Composting and Related Services to include the Contract Term as outlined in the Bid Specifications.
The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the aforementioned Contract Amendment.

*25-185 PURSUE A “FAIR AND OPEN” PROCESS IN AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR AN ALTERNATE PUBLIC DEFENDER

WHEREAS, there is a need in the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey for an Alternate Public Defender; and

WHEREAS, the laws of the State of New Jersey regarding the awarding of certain municipal contracts requires that said contracts be awarded pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20, et. seq., commonly called the “Pay to Play” law; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body desires to pursue the “Fair and Open” process set forth in the law in awarding contract for the Alternate Public Defender.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough of Closter that the Governing Body desires to pursue the Fair and Open Process in awarding contract for the Alternate Public Defender position and the Borough Clerk is hereby authorized to advertise for said position pursuant to the law.

*25-186 CANCEL BALANCE FOR OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND FOR PARK, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION IMPROVEMENTS ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, the Borough of Closter, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, previously adopted Open Space Ordinance 2022:1321 entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$261,500.00 FROM OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST

FUND FOR PARK, FARMLAND AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION IMPROVEMENTS” (the “Original Ordinance”) adopted **May 10, 2023**; and

WHEREAS, Section 1 states “The authorization to pay for the items on Exhibit A shall expire after **24 months** from the date of adoption of this Ordinance” Unexpended project funds remain in the project account for which the Original Ordinance appropriated funds for **EC Pollinator Garden, MacBain Benches, 9-11 Memorial Maintenance and Tree Removals**; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to formally cancel said balances so that the unexpended balances may be canceled against grant receivable balances, other receivable balances, or credited to Fund Balance, and unused debt authorizations may be canceled in the Open Space Trust Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that **\$16,416.28** be canceled from the original as follows:

C-04-23-321-002-001	\$200.00
C-04-23-321-003-001	\$711.43
C-04-23-321-004-001	\$6,950.00
C-04-23-321-005-001	\$8,554.85

*25-187 **AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF POLICE VEHICLE FROM SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Closter’s Police Department needs to purchase a vehicle; and

WHEREAS, Funds from the Law Enforcement Trust are available for this purchase; and

WHEREAS, The Police Department would like to purchase a vehicle from Toyota of Hackensack for \$32,966.35 as the lowest of three quotes; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council do hereby authorize the Police Department to purchase a police vehicle from Toyota of Hackensack for \$32,966.35 funded by the Special Law Enforcement Trust.

CERTIFICATE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

I, Francis Elenio, Chief Financial Officer of the Borough of Closter, hereby certify, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:9-140.1 et seq. and NJAC 5:30.4, that the funds are available to the Borough of Closter for the calendar year 2025 in account: **T-13-56-000-005-000 for \$32,966.35**.

*25-188 **AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF A \$10,000.00 STIPEND FOR DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR WILLIAM DAHLE FOR 2025**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Borough policy and practice, The Mayor & Council review salary and wages for the Department Heads; and

WHEREAS, The Public Works Committee has reviewed the compensation of DPW Director William Dahle; and
WHEREAS, the Public Works Committee has recommended DPW Director William Dahle receive a stipend of \$10,000.00 for the year 2025; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council are hereby authorizing a stipend of \$10,000.00 for DPW Director William Dahle for 2025.

*25-189 **APPROVING PAYMENT OF COMPENSATORY TIME TO PATROLMAN ANTHONY LOFARO**

WHEREAS, Anthony LoFaro has been employed as a Patrol Officer with the Closter Police Department since 5/1/2021, and

WHEREAS, Anthony LoFaro has given notice to leave employment with the Borough of Closter as of 6/30/2025, and
WHEREAS, Anthony LoFaro has accumulated 439.25 hours of compensatory time, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council approve payment of 439.25 hours of compensatory time at the rate of \$38.30 per hour.

*25-190 **APPROVING THE APPOINTMENT OF JOHN ROMANO TO PATROL OFFICER**

WHEREAS, John Romano, Shield #45, was appointed to the position of Probationary Patrol Officer on July 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, John Romano has successfully completed his probationary period in accordance with the Closter Police Department Rules & Regulations; Chapter 1, Section 4.24; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety Committee of the Mayor and Council and the Chief of the Police Department support and recommend the appointment of John Romano to the permanent position of Patrol Officer; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that John Romano is hereby appointed to the position of Patrol Officer in the Closter Police Department, effective July 1, 2025 and at the contractual rate of salary.

*25-191 REFUND BUILDING APPLICATION FEE – 377 RUCKMAN ROAD

WHEREAS, the following applicant, 377 Ruckman Road, owners Steven and Minjeong Park, had paid an application fee with the Borough of Closter’s Building Department for the inspection of lead paint. As of June 25, 2025, the Building Department stated no lead inspection was needed for 377 Ruckman Road; and

WHEREAS, the Building Official has approved a refund of application fee to be paid to the following:

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Steven and Minjeong Park	#507	\$ 20.00
	#508	\$200.00

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Governing Body hereby authorizes the Assistant Certified Financial Officer to refund the Building application fee to the above referenced application.

*25-192 APPROVING BHANDERI V CLOSTER BOROUGH – TAX APPEAL SETTLEMENT

WHEREAS, the taxpayers, Vithal & Vednat & Kamala Bhanderi., appealed the assessments levied on Block 2404, L 25 for the tax years 2019 and 2020; and

WHEREAS, the subject property is located at 159 Lake Street; and

WHEREAS, the Plaintiffs were represented by an Attorney in this matter; and

WHEREAS, the Borough’s Tax Assessor and Borough’s Residential Real Estate Tax Appraiser have approved and recommend that the appeal be settled as follows:

- 2019 - Withdrawn
- 2020 – Assessed Value shall be reduced from \$1,505,200 to \$1,482,600

WHEREAS, Plaintiffs have agreed to accept all refunds as a credit to their tax account; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Assessor is of the opinion that the valuation of the subject property is consistent with the true value of the property.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey that:

The proposed settlement for the tax appeals encaptioned Bhanderi v. Closter as hereinbefore set forth is approved and the Borough Attorney or a member of his firm is authorized to execute all documents necessary to effectuate its terms.

*25-193 APPROVING RELEASE OF TREE BOND ESCROW – 42 LAURENCE COURT

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 42 Laurence Court.

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 \$4,500.00.

Account #: 2010057323 Amount: \$4,500.00 Owner: Gene & Sophie Kim

*25-194 RECOGNIZED PRIDE MONTH

WHEREAS, the Borough of Closter is an inclusive community whose residents believe in safety, prosperity, equality and hope for all; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Closter recognizes the human rights of all citizens and actively supports an end to all forms of prejudice and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Closter is committed to promoting LGBTQ equality and fostering welcoming and affirming LGBTQ spaces; and

WHEREAS, the community recognizes the efforts of the many advocates and allies who have enabled this

progress and opened society’s eyes to the idea that love is love and no one should be forced to hide part of their identity; and

WHEREAS, without comprehensive federal civil rights protections, and because of legislative and executive attempts at rolling back LGBTQ advances or cultural and political climate shifts that empower LGBTQ hate crimes, LGBTQ individuals and families continue to face significant uncertainty, oppression and discrimination.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, in the State of New Jersey, hereby acknowledged June as LGBTQ Pride Month in the Borough of Closter.

*25-195 SUPPORTS ADOPT A CAT MONTH

WHEREAS, approximately four million cats end up in shelters every year, including thousands born every spring and summer during “kitten season”, and shelters can become overwhelmed by these new litters of kittens joining the cats already at local animal shelters and recue centers; and

WHEREAS, to highlight this issue the American Humane Society has promoted Adopt a Cat Month since 1975; and

WHEREAS, the Bergen County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center has numerous cats ready for adoption and exceptional staff who will help prospective families find the right cat; and

WHEREAS, that the Borough of Closter’s Mayor and Council urges those that are not able to adopt to consider donating food, toys, and blankets to the shelter, or donate their time to the shelter in person or by fostering kittens; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Closter, County of Bergen, in the State of New Jersey, hereby acknowledged June as Adopt a Shelter Cat Month in the Borough of Closter.

Item **R25-184** was pulled for review by Mayor Glidden. The Mayor stated that he would like to discuss. Borough Administrator James Winters explained that the contract was a bid contract not a negotiated contract. Discussion. The Mayor stated that he had an issue to resolve before passing the resolution. The rest of the Consent Agenda was approved.

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

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

No one wished to speak.

Councilwoman Chung asked whether the second July meeting was needed. Majority of the Governing Body agreed there needs to be a second Mayor and Council meeting in July.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The Regular Meeting adjourned at **7:55 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mari J. Margiotta, RMC, CMR
Borough Clerk