



**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF CLOSTER**

WORK SESSION MINUTES: WEDNESDAY – FEBRUARY 26, 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 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 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	✓	

Online: Joanne Riccardi Schuman, attorney. Attorney Bill Bailey joined the meeting at 7:20 pm.

4. PRESENTATION:

Closter Nature Center: Joel Ridden, Marc Gussen, and Tom Golodik of the Nature Center thanked the Borough of Closter and the DPW for their support. They spoke about the new executive director who works on fundraising and other areas, allowing Marc Gussen to focus on teaching and being a naturalist. They spoke about the loss of natural plants and their attempts to mitigate this and their need for increased fundraising. The fees charged for programming do not cover costs. The Mayor thanked the Nature Center personnel for what they do and spoke about the amazing asset it is. He asked about the efficacy of the fences that were purchased. As it turns out, the fences were recommended by an expert but were not as strong as would have been ideal. The fences that are now being purchased are made of mesh and are working better. Discussions included deer, the importance of plant diversity, and other issues.

5. **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF COMMUNICATION ITEMS:**

- a. MAIL LIST of February 14, 2025 Council President Yammarino spoke about Item #3 and asked whether the services would be covered by regular insurance. He was told that they would not be.
- b. MAIL LIST of February 21, 2025 Mayor Glidden spoke about Item #1 and Todd Bradbury's ideas about sustainable lighting. He asked that the Borough engineer follow up. Council President Yammarino spoke about Item #2 and property tax programs.

6. **ORDINANCES:**

INTRODUCTION:

a. **ORDINANCE NO. 2025:1356**

BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$625,000 FOR VARIOUS ROAD IMPROVEMENTS FOR AND BY THE BOROUGH OF CLOSTER IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY AND, AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$593,750 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH FOR FINANCING PART OF THE APPROPRIATION

ADOPTION:

a. **ORDINANCE NO. 2025:1353**

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 2024-1347 AND AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 200, "ZONING" ARTICLE III, DEFINITIONS AND WORD USAGE AND ARTICLE XIC, DISTRICT NO. 3A, BUSINESS AREA

No one commented on either ordinance. They will be addressed in the regular meeting.

7. **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR REGULAR MEETING**

- *25-079 SETTING THE 2025 FEE FOR SEWER SERVICE TO ALPINE PROPERTIES
- *25-080 AMENDMENT TO THE CERTIFICATE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS RESOLUTIONS #24-287 AND #24-308 BOSWELL ENGINEERING TO PROVIDE ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF RUCKMAN PARK WALKING PATH
- *25-081 WAIVING THE SIDEWALK REQUIREMENT OF THE CLOSTER CODE FOR THE PROPERTY AT 115 OAK STREET
- *25-082 SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO RESTORE FUNDS FROM THE STATE FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN THE 2025 BUDGET
- *25-083 ACCEPTING A GRANT AWARD FROM THE NJ BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES, CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM: COMMUNITY ENERGY PLANNING GRANT (CEPG)
- *25-084 AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF FULL TIME FINANCE CLERK – AMEE KESHWANI
- *25-085 AUTHORIZING LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM (LOSAP) CONTRIBUTION ON BEHALF OF: THE CLOSTER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE CLOSTER VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE & RESCUE CORPS

- *25-086 SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO RESTORE FUNDS FROM THE STATE FOR MUNICIPAL 2025 BUDGET – TABLED (DUPLICATE)
- *25-087 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE DEVELOPER’S AGREEMENT FOR 18 WILLIAM STREET
- *25-088 AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF A CRESCENT LIGHT STAND IN FRONT OF BOROUGH HALL FROM FEBRUARY 22 TO MARCH 31, 2025
- *25-089 APPROVING RELEASE OF ESCROW FUND FOR 674 CLOSTER DOCK ROAD
- *25-090 AUTHORIZING THE BIDDING OF THE 2024-2025 BOROUGH ROAD PAVING PROGRAM AND THE RUCKMAN PARK WALKING PATH

No one pulled any items.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY – YAMMARINO (Cho/Maroules)

Committees - Finance & Technology Commission Liaison- Recreation, Shade Tree, Food & Assistance
Financial Disclosure Statements will be available on April 1. The Finance Committee is starting the Budget process. Assessment letters were sent out. Property assessments have increased significantly. Recreation: A group met to discuss the celebration area at Memorial Field. The Boy Scouts are having a beefsteak dinner March 29 at the Harvest Church.

b. PUBLIC SAFETY - LATNER (Chung/Amitai)

Committee - Public Safety Liaison-NVRHS Board of Education & Library Board of Trustees
NVD clubs are doing well—Mock Trial and DECA were noted. “Anastasia” will be performed this weekend at NVD. The Library is renovating the DVD area. There are issues with roughhousing outside and parking when there is snow. The Library meetings have changed to 4:00 pm. The transportation survey has been sent out to the general public. Rise against Hunger will be this weekend at Tenakill, preparing meals for the hungry. The Crescent Moon ceremony was lovely.

c. PUBLIC WORKS - CHUNG (Yammarino/Cho)

Committee - Public Works Liaison-Closter Board of Education, Board of Health
The DPW has been busy with the snow and ice. The Library parking lot striping will take place in the warmer weather. The pole barn job has been awarded. Conway Wong and Paul Yarin have been working with the Environmental Commission on wastewater management posters. There has been improvement on bundling cardboard on windy recycling days.

d. ORDINANCES - CHO (Amitai/Latner)

Committee - Ordinance & Legislative Commission Liaison-Environmental, Zoning, Fire
There were 37 calls last month for the Fire Department. There are only 7 able-bodied firefighters right now. They are desperately seeking new members. Waldwick adopted a resolution supporting a bill for periodic cancer screening throughout the state, but it is only for paid firefighters. He would like to adopt a resolution to cover volunteer firefighters and all first responders. It will be brought to the next meeting. The Lions Club pancake breakfast is coming up soon. To-go items are available, as well as a tricky tray.

e. HUMAN RESOURCES – MAROULES (Latner/Yammarino)

Committee - Personnel Liaison- Historic Preservation
The 250th anniversary of the USA is coming up. Discussions have begun. The Borough has passed a resolution to join in.

f. LAND USE AND CONSTRUCTION - AMITAI (Chung/Maroules)

Building Liaison - Closter Improvement, Planning Board, Senior Citizens
Events for next year will be voted on at the next meeting. The tree lighting will be held at the celebration spot at Memorial Field. Liability snags are being encountered with the senior shoveling program. Conway Wong has ordered boards for Art in the Park, which will take place in May and June. Eden Shopping Center has given a grant for summer concerts. A jazz group will play Saturday 3/1. Another jazz group will play in March. The Planning Board subcommittee has been meeting about affordable housing. The Swim Club property was omitted from the list of parks, etc. The Mayor and Council is asked to correct that oversight. The Mayor advised that the corrected version will go to tomorrow's Planning Board meeting.

g. MAYOR'S REPORT

Ambulance Corps Northern Valley Mayor's Association

The Ambulance Corps is very busy. There is a dinner this weekend with a 70s theme. Donations for the Ambulance, Senior Center, and Food Pantry were presented at the Crescent Moon Celebration.

9. OLD BUSINESS

There was a meeting about the property at 624 Piermont Road, where a small piece of property was needed for the intersection improvement. At the next meeting of the Mayor and Council that project should be able to move forward.

Councilman Cho asked about the project on Venus. It is moving forward.

Councilwoman Amitai asked about the situation on 10 Jason. An exception to the tree ordinance is sought because there is no room to plant mitigating trees—the property is heavily treed. Mr. Snir should meet with Mr. Oetinger.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Councilwoman Latner relayed that she arranged a meeting between Linda Albelli from the Senior Center with the rabbi from the Chabad about ways to build a relationship.

Councilwoman Maroules asked about the bridge going into Westwood and when decisions will be made about the direction it will take. The Borough feels that a complete closure is unacceptable.

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

Ido Snir (purchased property at 10 Jason Woods). They want to build above the garage and were asked to plant two additional trees. The property is very heavily wooded. They would like to appeal because they don't know where to put them and don't feel it is needed. They Mayor said that he should meet with the head of the Shade Tree Commission, who is sympathetic to the situation, and bring a solution to the next meeting.

Steve Isaacson (97 Columbus) asked the Mayor about New Jersey Transit and the 14 Line. The Mayor has spoken to them. NJ Transit will speak at the March Mayors meeting. Mr. Isaacson's assessment went up 15%. The appraisal proof should lie with the company. He appreciates the Nature Center but reminded the Mayor and Council that they gave a lot to the Nature Center and not a lot to MacBain. He suggested perhaps DPW and Police could be trained to volunteer for Fire Department and Ambulance. He also suggested offering low-income housing to first responders. The Mayor liked the idea and will look into it.

Jeanne Stella (479 High Street) The reenactment was brought up at the Historical Preservation Commission. She is very distracted with what is happening with the country and is active politically. She has attended county

commission meetings. The RFP has gone out for someone to fix the farmhouse. She has collected red cards. She feels that any immigrant should have one. She hopes that Closter will fly the pride flag and fly it for the month, even though some other towns are not flying it. Friday 2/28 is an economic blackout.

Allan Rappaport (844 Hemlock Court) originally came because he saw that the Swim Club had been omitted. Money is available for municipalities from Open Space. He encouraged people to write grants. He uses the company Deer Solutions to counteract the deer infestation. Don Torrino runs the Nature Center in Ridgefield Park. He will help people learn what to plant that is resistant to deer. The Northern Valley has great Mutual Aid.

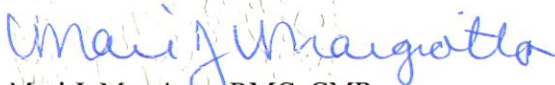
Ryan Wilson (Northwoods) is looking for site plans related to the Swim Club. The Mayor explained that there is no site plan. The Master Plan is being amended to include the Swim Club as recreational space.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

The Work Session was adjourned at **8:23 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Mari J. Margiotta, RMC, CMR
Borough Clerk

