

MINUTES
BOROUGH OF NORWOOD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING
February 25, 2026
7:00 PM
MAYOR BARSA

COUNCILMAN ASCOLESE	COUNCILMAN BRIZZOLARA
COUNCILWOMAN DEBIASA	COUNCILMAN FOSCHINO
COUNCILWOMAN HAUSMANN	COUNCIL PRESIDENT KIM

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Norwood was held at Borough Hall on the above date.

Mayor Barsa called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and led those in attendance in a salute to the American Flag and asked for a moment of silence.

Mayor Barsa stated:

“Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law, P.L. 1975, Ch. 231, setting forth the time, date, place and purpose of this Public Meeting through a legal notice published in the Record and Star Ledger, filing a copy in the Borough Clerk’s office, and posting on the bulletin board.”

ROLL CALL OF THE COUNCIL

Roll Call:	Mayor Barsa	Present
	Councilman Ascolese	Present
	Councilman Brizzolara	Present
	Councilwoman DeBiasa	Present
	Councilman Foschino	Present
	Councilwoman Hausmann	Present
	Council President Kim	Present

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

1. Ordinance 2026:04 - Salary Ordinance

Councilman Brizzolara asked what this ordinance changes. Mr. Padovano said this ordinance puts into effect the changes made from the motion last meeting regarding the Assistant DPW Director salary. He also took this opportunity to raise the maximum of the DPW Director salary.

Councilwoman DeBiasa noted that the Director has a lower minimum of \$90,000.00 where the Assistant starts at \$115,000.00. Mr. Padovano said he based the numbers off of what was agreed upon for the Assistant position at the last meeting. Mayor Barsa said those were the old numbers for the Director that have been there, it's just a range. Councilwoman DeBiasa suggested switching the numbers and having Assistant position start at \$90,000.00. Councilman Brizzolara suggested having both positions start at \$90,000.00. Mr. Padovano said he can make that change if everyone agrees. Councilman Foschino suggested starting both positions at \$115,000.00. Mr. Padovano said he will make that change if there are no objections.

It was moved by Councilman Foschino and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to approve ordinance 2026:04, Salary Ordinance, with changes of having both the DPW Director and Assistant Director minimum be \$115,000.00, the Director maximum be \$150,000.00, and the Assistant maximum be \$135,000.00. In the roll call vote, there were three yes votes and three no votes with the Mayor breaking the tie with a yes vote.

Councilman Ascolese – Yes
Councilman Brizzolara – No
Councilwoman DeBiasa – No
Councilman Foschino – Yes
Councilwoman Hausmann – No
Councilman Kim – Yes
Mayor Barsa - Yes

Public Hearing on Ordinance 2026:04 will be March 11, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES

2. Ordinance 2026:01 – An Ordinance of The Borough of Norwood Amending Chapter 233-40.1 Of the Borough Code Entitled “Affordable Housing Overlay Zoning District” In Furtherance of The Borough’s Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to open to the public for comments on ordinance 2026:01. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

There was no one present who wished to speak.

It was moved by Councilman Ascolese and seconded by Councilman Foschino to close to the public for comments on ordinance 2026:01. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

3. Ordinance 2026:02 – An Ordinance of The Borough of Norwood Amending Chapter 233-40.1 Of the Borough Code Entitled “Affordable Housing Overlay Zoning District” In Furtherance of The Borough’s Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan

It was moved by Councilman Ascolese and seconded by Councilman Brizzolara to open to the public for comments on ordinance 2026:02. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

There was no one present who wished to speak.

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Foschino to close to the public for comments on ordinance 2026:02. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

4. Ordinance 2026:03 – An Ordinance Repealing Chapter 233, Articles XI And XII Of The Code Of The Borough Of Norwood Entitled “Affordable Housing Requirements” And “Affordable Housing Development Fees And Trust Fund,” And Establishing A New Article XI Entitled “Affordable Housing Ordinance”, To Address The Requirements Of The Fair Housing Act (FHA) As Amended, And The Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC), As Amended, Regarding Compliance With The Borough’s Affordable Housing Obligations

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to open to the public for comments on ordinance 2026:03. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

There was no one present who wished to speak.

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Foschino to close to the public for comments on ordinance 2026:03. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

CONSENT AGENDA

Matters listed below are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion of the Council and one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests an item be removed.

Approval of the Following Minutes:

February 11, 2026 Mayor & Council Meeting

February 11, 2026 Mayor & Council Closed Session Meeting

Approval of the following Resolutions:

2026:63 A Resolution of Norwood Adopting the Bergen County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

2026:64 A Resolution Authorizing Payment for the 2025 Stipend Program for the Norwood Fire Company No. 1

2026:65 Payment of Vouchers

2026:66 Approving Rocco Varni as Member Appointment to Norwood Fire Co. No. 1

Councilman Foschino asked to pull resolution 2026:64 and Councilman Brizzolara asked to pull resolution 2026:65.

Councilman Foschino said he has spoken with the Fire Chief regarding resolution 2026:64 and will be meeting with him again to discuss the stipend program next week. He asked that the resolution be pulled and placed on the March 11th agenda.

Councilman Brizzolara asked what the charge to the New York State Thruway was for. Councilman Foschino said it was an EZ-Pass violation charge.

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to approve the amended Consent Agenda, with the exception of resolution 2026:64, and that February 11, 2025 Mayor & Council Meeting minutes be approved for content and release. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Broad Street Bridge

2026:67 Resolution Authorizing Requests for Proposals

Mr. Loverich advised that a resolution is needed to authorize the Borough to go out for proposal for the engineering services for the Broad Street Bridge project. It has been recommended that we use the federal funding for the engineering design. We have gone back and forth with the state to develop a 50 page RFP with their standards. The personnel at state level who are responsible for the grant need to know where the balance of the funds will come from. We developed a cost estimate to project with the timeline given the federal grant process. Construction is expected to start in 2028. The bottom dollar is around \$2.8 million. This includes soft costs for construction management and contingences. The balance of \$1.4 million needs to come from another funding source. There are grants available for this, Local Bridge Fund and Local aid infrastructure fund. Mr. Loverich suggests looking into those and said he will contact the grant writer to begin the process.

Councilman Brizzolara asked if it is safe to wait another two years to begin the project. Mr. Loverich said the last safety report is from April 2023 and the structure was in fair condition, rated 5 out of 9. He does not expect there to be any major changes since the last report. The Borough can request a new report from the county.

Councilman Ascolese asked if there is a weight limit on that bridge. Mr. Loverich said there is a weight limit and the 2023 report did not indicate a need to lower the weight restriction.

It was moved by Councilman Foschino and seconded by Councilman Brizzolara to approve resolution 2026:67. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

Bamboo Ordinance

Councilman Brizzolara informed the governing body that the Construction Office noticed a homeowner that they need to remove 10 feet of bamboo off their property line. Councilman Brizzolara was under the impression that anyone who had bamboo prior to this ordinance was grandfathered in. Removing 10 ft of bamboo would eradicate all that is there. The intent of the ordinance was to stop the bamboo from creeping into the neighbors property.

Councilwoman Hausmann said she remembers that during the discussion this would not affect bamboo that was already in place.

Mr. Corriston said the ordinance states that anyone who has bamboo prior to November 12, 2025 has to contain it, not necessarily remove it. Anyone after November 12, 2025 cannot have bamboo.

Mayor Barsa said he believes there is a material that can be put down that would stop the bamboo from spreading. Mayor Barsa asked Mr. Jackson if he told the homeowner they have to remove the existing bamboo. Mr. Jackson said he copied and pasted the language from the ordinance into the letter.,

Councilman Foschino said according to Rutgers there has to be a barrier 10 feet back from the property line to contain the bamboo. Councilman Foschino suggested bringing in a professional from the Rutgers Agricultural program to educate the governing body on the proper way to handle this.

Councilwoman Hausmann said she has contact with the State that could also provide guidance.

Mr. Padovano will contact both Rutgers and the State for assistance.

Councilman Brizzolara asked Mr. Jackson if the entire Borough has been checked for bamboo. Mr. Jackson said it has not because they cannot access residents backyards to see what is there.

Demarest Street Parking Proposal from Chief Federici

Chief Federici explained that due to the width of Demarest Street, emergency vehicles cannot fit through if there are cars parked on both sides. Currently, there is an ordinance in place that limits parking to the east side only. Some residents have complained about this and asked for the matter to be reviewed. After doing some research, Chief Federici feels that it would be beneficial to change the ordinance to prohibit parking a specific distance from Frasco and Rivervale Avenue on the west side of the street and open the west side of the street in the middle. In the middle of the street there will be no parking allowed on the east side.

Mayor Barsa said before the ordinance gets changed again to do a trial run to see how the new parking layout will work. Once the weather allows the DPW will work with Chief Federici on relocating the signs.

BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT

Mr. Padovano said the election for the referendum will be held on March 10th. This will be the same as any other elections with both polling places open.

BOROUGH ATTORNEY

Mr. Corriston advised the governing body that the Supreme court turned down the Montvale lawsuit and we will not need the special meeting on March 13th. The ordinance will be voted on at the March 11th meeting.

BOROUGH ENGINEER

Mr. Loverich informed the governing body that there will be a bid opening on March 4th for the Summit Street roadway improvements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public. The motion was forwarded by Councilman Ascolese and seconded by Councilman Brizzolara. All council members present approved the motion.

Ms. Robin Schwarty, 196 Hudson Avenue, showed a picture of the bamboo that is invading her property to Councilwoman DeBiasa. She said she has hired a specialty landscaper who only removes bamboo to remove it from her property in the spring. It will cost her over \$12,000.00.

Ms. Karin Dwyer, 31 Demarest Street, asked for clarification on the parking. Chief Federici explained there will be no parking on the west side approaching Frasco and Rivervale Avenue and the center of the street will have no parking on the east side.

Mr. Dave Hausmann, 71 Briarwood, thanked the DPW for the excellent job they did keeping the roads clear during the most recent snowstorm. He also stated that he read that a two foot trench would contain the bamboo. Lastly, he asked if the lawsuit with Montvale was now over to which Mr. Corriston replied that it was.

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public. The motion was forwarded by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese. All council members present approved the motion.

CLOSED SESSION

2026:68 Approval of Resolution Authorizing the Council to Proceed in Closed Session – Matters of Employment

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to close the regular meeting and go to closed session. The motion was forwarded by Councilman Ascolese and seconded by Council President Kim. All council members present approved the motion.

RETURN TO OPEN

The meeting resumed in open session at 9:10 PM.

It was moved by Councilman Foschino and seconded by Council President Kim approve the promotion of Eric Schuck to the position of DPW Assistant Director at a salary of \$125,000.00. This will include Mr. Schuck holding the CPWM license for the Borough, an annual overtime allowance up to \$2,500.00, as well as providing him with a take-home vehicle if one is available. If no vehicle is available, he will be reimbursed for milage based on the IRS rate. This will be effective March 2, 2026. In the roll call vote, there were three yes voters and three no votes with the Mayor breaking the tie with a yes vote.

Councilman Ascolese – Yes

Councilman Brizzolara – No

Councilman Brizzolara said the only people who knew there would be a vote tonight were the ones that were proponents for the position. The financials were asked for a month ago and they were received an hour ago with no time to review. No business conducts business this way except for Norwood. He is very concerned about the potential tax increase and is not comfortable with the financials given to him

tonight. Another situation in town is the reassessment with 45% of residents seeing a tax increase. He feels we should try to save every dollar we can.

Councilwoman DeBiasa – No

Councilman Foschino – Yes

Councilman Foschino said the financials were from the Borough's CFO and Mr. Padovano reviewed the figures and they are correct. The figures show a savings with the promotion. The ad for the position was advertised at the DPW and there was only one application received. The current CPWM for the Borough no longer wishes to hold that position and the Borough is obligated to have someone with the license in place. We used taxpayer money to send this person to school knowing he would be using the license for the Borough. If the Finance Committee do not feel they will be able to provide a successful budget they should step down. He is willing to take on that task.

Councilwoman Hausmann – No

Councilwoman Hausmann said she is voting no but not because she does not agree with the position. She feels that Mr. Shuck is an asset to the DPW and the position is completely necessary but because she believes the 2026 budget should be in place first. We are once again discussing the use of surplus to fill the gaps. She would be more comfortable voting to fill this position after the budget is finalized. She feels it is completely unprofessional to jam this vote through. Councilwoman Hausmann said she has confidence in Mr. Schuck and this does not reflect her feelings towards him and the position.

Mayor Barsa – Yes

Mayor Barsa said he is very happy to vote yes.

It was moved by Councilman Ascolese and seconded by Councilman Foschino to approve the contract extension for Chief Federici, including his salary increases, overtime rates and being permitted to work overtime in the surrounding towns. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was forwarded Councilman Foschino and seconded by Council President Kim. All council members present approved the motion. Meeting was adjourned the meeting at 9:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jordan Padovano

Borough Clerk