

MINUTES
BOROUGH OF NORWOOD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
PUBLIC MEETING

April 9, 2025

7:00 PM

MAYOR BARSA

COUNCILMAN ASCOLESE	COUNCILMAN BRIZZOLARA
COUNCILMAN CONDOLEO	COUNCILMAN PRESIDENT FOSCHINO
COUNCILWOMAN HAUSMANN	COUNCILMAN 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 7:00 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
	Councilman Condoleo	Absent
	Councilman President Foschino	Present
	Councilwoman Hausmann	Present
	Councilman Kim	Present

CORRESPONDENCE

March Grant Report
Building Department March Fee Log
Fire Department March Report
Police Department March Report

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE

1. Ordinance 2025:05 - Amending Chapter 222 the Code of the Borough of Norwood Regulating Vehicles and Traffic to Establish Four-Way Stops at Various Intersections

The mayor read the ordinance by title. Motion by Councilman Brizzolara, second by Councilman Ascolese, that Ordinance 2025:05 be introduced on first reading, with a public hearing on May 14, 2025.

There being five (5) ayes and no nays Ordinance 2025:05 was approved

2. Ordinance 2025:06 Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a CAP Bank

The mayor read the ordinance by title. Motion by Councilman Brizzolara, second by Councilman Ascolese, that Ordinance 2025:06 be introduced on first reading, with a public hearing on May 14, 2025.

There being five (5) ayes and no nays Ordinance 2025:06 was approved

PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES:

Ordinance 2025:03 Establishing Jones Court Road Dedication

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Council President Foschino to open the meeting to the public for comments concerning this ordinance. All Council Members present voted for the motion.

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to close the meeting to the public. It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to approve Ordinance 2025:03

On the roll call vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers Ascolese, Brizzolara, Foschino, Hausmann, Kim

Absent: Condoleo

Nays: None

There being five (5) ayes and no nays Ordinance 2025:03 was approved

Ordinance 2025:03 Establishing Jones Court Road Dedication

Ordinance 2025:04 – Amending Article III Chapter 168-18 of the Borough Code
Detailing Background Checks

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to open the meeting to the public for comments concerning this ordinance. All Council Members present voted for the motion.

It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to close the meeting to the public. It was moved by Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to approve Ordinance 2025:04

On the roll call vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers Ascolese, Brizzolara, Foschino, Hausmann, Kim

Absent: Condoleo

Nays: None

There being five (5) ayes and no nays Ordinance 2025:04 was approved

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:

March 26, 2025 Mayor & Council Meeting

Approval of the following Resolutions:

2025-83 Resolution Awarding Contract to I-M Cleaning, Inc. for Janitorial Services

2025:84 Resolution Appointment of Representative to the County Public Safety
Advisory Board

2025:85 Resolution Authorizing the Change Order to the Contract for Millbrook
Circle Drainage Improvements

2025:86 Resolution of the Governing Body's Certification of Compliance with the U.S.
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

2025:87 Self Examination Resolution

2025:88 Payment of Vouchers

It was moved by Councilwoman Hausmann and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to approve the amended Consent Agenda and that March 26, 2025, Mayor & Council Meeting minutes be approved for content and release, with the exception of Resolution 2025:83. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

Council President Foschino said the new contract was about \$2,200.00 per month and asked why there was a large increase. Mr. Tracy said the main reason for the increase is that the contractor said he is not making any money. His bid was the lowest of four (4) quotes. Council President Foschino said in this financial climate the Borough cannot approve a 50% increase. He would like to table this discussion. Mr. Tracy said the Borough is buying the supplies, we are only paying for labor.

It was moved by Council President Foschino and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to table Resolution 2025:83, awarding the contract to I-M Cleaning. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2025 Budget

Mayor Barsa thanked Councilman Condoleo, CFO Chris Battaglia, and Borough Auditor Steve Wielkottz. Mr. Wielkottz said the budget cycle of 2025 has been the worst he has seen on the past forty-six (46) years. Norwood has done a very good in past years building up the surplus. This helps to mitigate some of the increases in the appropriations. State pension contribution, library funding for BCCLS, and debt service drive up the budget. The things that the Borough can control are going down. By digging deeper into the reserves that allows for a tax increase of 3.9%.

Council President Foschino asked what would need to be cut from the budget to get the increase to 3%. Mr. Wielkottz said another \$125,000.00 would need to be cut to drop to 3%. Mr. Wielkottz said the Borough has cut expenses to what is needed to be spent this year. The only way to reduce more is to dig deeper into the surplus.

Councilman Kim asked how much of the reserve is being used. Mr. Wielkottz said \$1,697,600.00 is being used which is a little more than last year.

Mr. Wielkottz said if the Federal Government is cutting State Government funds, the State Government will cut funds to the municipalities.

Council President Foschino said he compared the 2024 actuals to the 2025 proposed and asked why are we budgeting increases, such as the Fire Department O/E. Why was that increased if they were flat last year. He also asked why the library

receiving an increase of \$80,000.00. Mr. Battaglia said the Fire Department increase is a cost from Veolia to flush the fire hydrants. The DPW salary increases are placeholders for part time employees that we had last year and might need this year. It can be reduced if no part timers are hired. Council President Foschino said both part timers were lost before the end of last year and there are no hired for this year and we are a quarter of the way through the season. Mr. Battaglia said there are also raise and step increases that are a part of the increase.

Councilwoman Hausmann said there is an employee at the DPW who advised Mr. Tracy that he will be moving and leaving the Norwood DPW. Two other employees could be out between three (3) and six (6) months. Due to that Councilwoman Hausmann feels a full-time employee should be hired.

Mayor Barsa said if you strip down a budget to much it hurts the upcoming years. Once you remove it you cannot get it back. It will negatively impact future projects.

Councilman Ascolese asked if the budget went down to 3%, how much would it go down per taxpayer. Mr. Wielkott said about \$50.00. Councilman Ascolese said he feels it is not worth the savings of \$46.00 to potentially hurt us more next year.

Mayor Barsa said the services Norwood provides to the residents is far superior to other towns.

Council President Foschino said there should be checks and balances to ensure the funds being sent are necessary.

It was moved by Councilwoman Hausmann and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to authorize the Introduction of the 2025 Municipal Budget. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

Recreation By-Law Changes

Councilwoman Hausmann asked what the change is to the recreation bylaws. Mr. Padovano said the new changes were provided in the budget. There is also a member from the Borough Attorney on the dais advising on the difference of a Recreation Board and a Recreation Committee.

Mayor Barsa said the Recreation Board is an advisory Board with no binding power. The governing body would have to approve any recommendations made by the Recreation Board.

Council President Foschino asked that the Chairman of the Recreation Committee be present for this discussion. The governing body can then ask them for information on why they are requesting these changes.

Councilman Ascolese agreed saying he has questions that only the Recreation Committee can answer.

Mayor Barsa said this can be listed on the May 4th agenda.

INTRODUCTION OF 2025 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Resolution 2025:89 Approving the Introduction of the 2025 Municipal Budget

It was moved by Councilwoman Hausmann and seconded by Councilman Ascolese to approve Resolution 2025:89, the Introduction of the 2025 Municipal Budget. In the roll call vote, all Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

Public hearing on the 2025 Municipal Budget will be held on May 14, 2025

Mr. Padovano read the required Notice of Hearing.

Councilman Brizzolara thanked the professionals that worked on the budget and for continuing to provide exceptional advice, as well as the members of the governing body.

Committee Reports

Councilwoman Hausmann

Councilwoman Hausmann said there was nothing to report for the Board of Health. The Environmental Commission has a few events coming up. There is a cleanup at the garden on April 12th at 10 am, on May 3rd Bracco Farms will give a presentation in the garden at 10am, and there will be a history hike of Skunk Hollow on May 4th at 10am. The DPW will lose a full-time employee, No formal has been given yet. There will also be two full-time employees taking paternity leave. The backstop of the Knickerbocker field was damaged by raking the clay onto the grass and surrounding area. It will create a lip where the grass and clay meet and also kill the grass. We would like to close the fields when it rains or have a play in place to have someone pay for the cleanup. Mr. Tracy said its very frustrating to see this happening to the field. Mayor Barsa said the only teams permitted to use Knickerbocker are NPS, NVOT, and the 7th/8th grade Knickerbocker team. These teams should be formally taught how to care for the field properly. Council President Foschino suggested posting signs to close the fields when it is not usable. Mayor Barsa said it is the responsibly of the DPW Director to make the decision to close the field. Mr. Tracy should notify Ms. Volpitta to contact those teams scheduled and also advise the Polcie Department when fields are closed.

Councilman Ascolese

Councilman Ascolese attended the Seniors Club business meeting on Monday. They had a lecture on memory care that was very informative. The Personnel Committee will have a special meeting on April 15th to discuss DPW employment.

Council President Foschino

The Easter egg hunt will be held on Sunday at 2pm followed by the playground grand opening. The opening day parade for baseball/softball will be held on April 26th. The 3rd/4th grade girls and 5th/6th grade boys won soccer championships. Registration for the Raiders football and cheer is now open. The registration for the spring basketball clinic is also open.

Councilman Brizzolara

There has been a drop in construction activity in town. Most notable decrease was in the electrical permits. Home sales have also slowed down. Multiple businesses had CO's issued.

Councilman Kim

There was no NVOT or library meeting held. The Greenway Project held a meeting and discussed an upcoming conference that will be held on April 15th. There is a proposal for a new website. There is an application pending for Congressional funding.

Borough Engineer Report

Mr. Loverich said the pickleball courts will be open on Memorial Day. ADA ramps have been installed at Frasco and Tilden. Paving for those streets is scheduled for early May.

Borough Administrator/Clerk Report

Mr. Padovano said that Resolution 2025:71 had missing information. The Resolution was updated with the missing information. Mr. Padovano will be working with the vendor in May to update the Borough website. The shred event will be held on May 24th between 9am-1pm in the DPW lot.

Borough Attorney Report

Mr. Corrison sent out two (2) letters regarding easements. We are waiting for a date from Superior Court for the affordable housing date.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Ms. Barbara Vanderbeck, Foxhill, asked if the Borough is looking at a different location, the property closer to Broadway, to build low income housing. She said there is a grave danger if there is a train for the fire department to get to McClellan. There is too much traffic on that one area. Mayor Barsa said there is an approved site for the third round of affordable housing on the east side McClellan. It is approved for twenty-three (23) units. The Borough had looked to move it across the street and down further but was told no because it was already an approved site. There will be no safety issues for anyone in that area at any time. Under round four (4) of affordable housing the Borough has an obligation of one hundred sixty one (161) units. We are in a lawsuit against overdevelopment.

Ms. Suzanne Debiasa, asked how many units were approved for the Bank of America site. She also said she appreciates what Council President Foschino did regarding the budget. She asked what the increase for Livingston Street was for. Mayor Barsa said thirty-six (36) units, with six (6) being affordable will be going into the Bank of America property. Mayor Barsa advised that the projects slated for Livingston Street were not completed last year and will be done this year. Ms. Debiasa said it's hard for a resident to read the budget to see what was decreased. Mr. Padovano said the resident can submit an OPRA request for her specific request. The budget that was introduced tonight should be on the website in about a week.

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.

Mr. Tracy thanked the governing body and Borough employees for the flowers for the passing of his mother and all the condolences.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Barsa asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was forwarded Councilman Brizzolara and seconded by Councilman Ascolese. All council members present approved the motion. Meeting was adjourned the meeting at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jordan Padovano
Borough Clerk