

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MARCH 5, 2026**

PRESENT: Mayor Arvin Amatorio, Council President Domingo Almonte, and Council members Buddy Deauna, Ora Kornbluth, and Hernando Rivera

ABSENT: Councilman Thomas A. Lodato, Councilman Marc Pascual, and Borough Administrator Corey Gallo

ALSO PRESENT: Borough Attorney John Schettino
Borough Clerk Marie Quiñones-Wilson

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m. with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act Statement, "in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. Meeting dates for the year are confirmed at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Notice was published in the Record Newspaper, placed on a Municipal Bulletin Board, posted on the Borough website, and is on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk. In case of an emergency, exits are in the back and to your right. Please turn off all cell phones."

The Salute to the Flag was led by Council President Almonte.

AGENDA CHANGES

Councilperson Kornbluth motioned to add Personnel Action Letter from Board of Fire Officers to Correspondence, and Resolution #26-089 to approve contract extensions for owner representation services with Accenture and Resolution #26-090 to authorize Borough Clerk office payments. Councilperson Rivera seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/BOROUGH ENGINEER

A. Engineering & Inspection Status Report

Tino D' Amore of Remington & Vernick, Borough Engineer, reported that the 2025 road program has been completed. He stated there are punch list items pending that need to be completed. The bid documents for the 2026 road program are being prepared, but the surveying operations have been slower due to the weather. The Department of Public Works (DPW) has completed the sanitary and storm sewer videos, just waiting on Harcourt and N. Queen St. Mr. D'Amore stated that an RFQ for the cleaning and televising of Washington Avenue will also be completed, and will add any sagging pipes that the DPW feel need to be televised.

ORDINANCES

A. Adoption of Ordinances

Mayor Amatorio read into the record:

The following ordinance published herewith was first read by title on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center.

ORDINANCE 26-2660 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 186 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED "LAND DEVELOPMENT"

Public Comments on Ordinance 26-2660.

No one came forward.

Motion by Council President Almonte, seconded by Councilperson Kornbluth, to pass Ordinance 26-2660 on second and final reading and is hereby adopted and notice of same shall be published according to law as amended.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

Mayor Amatorio read into the record:

The following ordinance published herewith was first read by title on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center.

ORDINANCE 26-2662 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING ORDINANCE

Public Comments on Ordinance 26-2662.

Barry Doll, resident, stated that last week or so, he read several articles in The Record and today's Twin Boro News page 6, that about nine Bergen County towns appealed to Supreme Court for a delay, opposing the certain rules and regulations proposed by the State. He understands the borough is going through a transition with building affordable housing, but the matter is confusing. Mr. Doll read portions of the article into the record pertaining to the 4th round of affordable housing. Each town that participated paid \$20,000. He asked if someone could explain the ordinance and what it means to the residents of the borough, how does this impact the town, who is included. Mr. Doll inquired if the borough is complying and if the Planning Board reviewed the ordinance.

Borough Attorney Schettino explained that the ordinance was reviewed and prepared by the borough planner in order to comply with the affordable housing regulations and the 4th round certification, and immunity from any lawsuit. He stated that from an affordable housing standpoint, Bergenfield is somewhat fortunate because there is no open vacant land and the requirements are less. In order to comply, the borough creates overlay zones by ordinance, to allow for affordable housing by requiring structures of 5 or more units to have a 20% set aside. Mr. Schettino explained that the borough has to take several actions to receive certification, and part of the process is to adopt this ordinance to comply until the next round in 2028.

Mayor Amatorio confirmed the Planning Board reviewed the ordinance last night and endorsed the same.

Mr. Doll stated that he doesn't have anything against affordable housing, but as the borough develops, it seems the borough is creating high population density zones, which is a concern. He asked the State provides subsidies for housing.

Mayor Amatorio stated that every building will be required to have a 20% set aside for affordable housing. As far as the developer is concerned, they are losing money. However, this is a requirement.

Mr. Schettino explained that the affordable housing depends on low to moderate income, there is no subsidy programs. The cost of the apartment is set based on the medium on the value. The overlay

zones are created to force the developer to have affordable housing, otherwise, no developer would build. The developers have to absorb the costs of the affordable housing unit.

Mr. Doll inquired if there are any thoughts on senior housing.

Mr. Schettino stated that senior housing is included in the ordinance.

Mayor Amatorio stated that is part of the plan, but the borough cannot force the developer. The borough is encouraging developers to build senior housing, and it is allowed in the ordinance.

Councilperson Rivera explained that the borough isn't building everywhere. The borough has set specific areas where building can take place, and other residential areas will remain the same. There are certain areas created for the developments. He stated that he will not support buildings in all areas.

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, to pass Ordinance 26-2662 on second and final reading and is hereby adopted and notice of same shall be published according to law as amended.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

No report.

MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS

No reports.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a.) Rodriguez/Jefferson School **RE:** Request to Reserve Hickory Field for 5th Parents' Association Grade Celebration/June 17, 2026 (Rain Date: June 18, 2026)/9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- b.) Ballo/Bergenfield Public Library **RE:** Request to Reserve Cooper's Pond for Outdoor Story Times/Tuesday, July 21, 2026 and August 4, 2026/1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- c.) Naylis/Board of Fire Officers **RE:** Personnel Action Letter dated February 28, 2026

Motion by Council President Almonte, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, and all members present voting in favor, to accept Correspondence. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mark Lillian, resident, stated that he sent an email in February pertaining to the vacant bank on 60 W. Main. He inquired if the building is owned by the borough because he would like to offer suggestions for the development of the property.

Mayor Amatorio explained that the property foreclosed by the previous owner and is owned by the Borough. The borough is speaking with developers that are interested in the property, but it is a process and plans will have to be submitted for approval. There is interest and hopefully the borough will soon receive its revenue.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS TO BE ACTED UPON:

A. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT RESOLUTION 26-082. All matters listed below are considered by the Governing Body to be routine in nature. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by the Governing Body, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

- a. ~~26-083/To Approve Bill List~~
- b. **26-084/To Approve Proposal for Engineering Services – Twin Boro Park Phase III Improvements – T&M Associates**
- c. **26-085/To Authorize Purchase and Approve Contract for The Supply and Planting of Trees – Victoria’s Nursery**
- d. **26-086/To Authorize the Execution of a Grant Agreement with Bergen County for Community Development Block Grant Funds for Brook Street Road Improvements**
- e. **26-087/To Approve Veteran’s Tax Exemption – 7 Irving Place**

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, to approve the Consent Resolution #26-082 as amended.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

Councilperson Kornbluth motioned to amend bill list Resolution #26-083 to remove two payments. Councilperson Rivera seconded motion. The majority present voted in favor, Council President Almonte recused.

Resolution #26-083/To Approve Bill List

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Rivera, that Resolution #26-083 be approved as amended.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

B. RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #26-088/To Hire Part-Time Laborer – Ryan Lally

Motion by Councilperson Rivera, seconded by Council President Almonte, that Resolution #26-088 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

Resolution #26-089/To Approve Contract Extension – Owner Representation Services – Accenture

Motion by Council President Almonte, seconded by Councilperson Rivera, that Resolution #25-089 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

Resolution #26-090/To Authorize Borough Clerk Office Payments

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution #26-090 be approved.

On a roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilperson Lodato:	<i>absent</i>	Councilperson Kornbluth:	<i>aye</i>
Councilperson Deauna:	<i>aye</i>	Councilperson Rivera:	<i>aye</i>
Council President Almonte:	<i>recuse</i>	Councilperson Pascual:	<i>absent</i>

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor and Councilmembers thanked all for coming and wished all a goodnight.

Councilperson Kornbluth stated God bless America, our Veterans, and all the troops currently fighting for freedom.

Councilperson Rivera stated that he supports senior housing, but it's difficult to find a developer willing to invest in senior housing because of the returns. We are paying attention to this and have been working on this. He stated that he celebrated Iftar with the Muslim community and had a great night. He wished all a good night.

Mayor Amatorio wished all a good night and stated that we are praying for the safety of all troops in the Middle East.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, second by Councilperson Rivera and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Marie Quiñones-Wilson
Borough Clerk