

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
MAYOR & COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 21, 2026
8:00 P.M.**

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

ABSENT: All members present.

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

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:02 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 is sent to the Record, Star Ledger, and Cablevision, placed on a Municipal Bulletin Board and is on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk."

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

AGENDA CHANGES

Council President Almonte motioned to add resident Murphy's request to reserve Memorial Park Pavilion for a family gathering on Sunday, May 3, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. Councilperson Kornbluth seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilperson Pascual to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2026 Regular Public Meeting, the March 17, 2026 Closed Session Minutes (not to be released), the April 7, 2026 Work Session Meeting, and the April 7, 2026 Closed Session Minutes (not to be released). Council President Almonte seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS I

Mayor Amatorio opened the meeting and invited the public for comments on agenda items only, limited to five minutes per speaker.

No one came forward.

There being no one who wishes to be heard, Mayor Amatorio closed Verbal Communications I.

PRESENTATIONS

A. Proclamation – First Responders

Mayor Amatorio invited all the first responders to join him to be honored for their heroic actions during the last snowstorm. He explained that there were many emergencies, including one person who collapsed while shoveling snow and needed CPR. He thanked the individuals for their service and for their commitment to public safety and dedication to saving lives.

Mayor Amatorio read the Proclamation into the record and presented Certificates of Appreciation to Police Captain William Duran, Police Officer James Jenkins, BVAC Chief Ryan Shell, BVAC Deputy Chief Efraim Rudin, and BVAC members Alex Navia, Ivonne Bustamante, and Shimmie Schwarcz.

B. Proclamation – Good Samaritans

Mayor Amatorio stated that in addition to the first responders, there were students who called 911 and remained on the scene during an emergency involving a High School student that was in a motor vehicle accident. Mayor Amatorio presented Certificates of Appreciation to Sean Arrieta Kingston Faiella, and Justin Robles for their heroic actions.

C. Police Department Award Presentation

Police Chief Rabboh stated that Captain William Duran, after completing his duties, heard the emergency call and immediately responded, found an individual without a pulse, starting CPR. Officer James Jenkins showed up shortly thereafter and both provided CPR on the individual until the Bergenfield Volunteer Ambulance Corp members arrived on scene. He honored Captain Duran and Officer Jenkins and presented them with a Life Savings Citation award.

Police Chief Rabboh presented Police Officer Kyle Bruno and Police Officer Keith Brooks with a Unit Citation award for bringing in a life. Police Chief stated that both Officers attended to a 911 emergency call and found an expecting woman in distress. Officer Bruno and Officer Brooks assessed the circumstances, prepared the scene to ensure the safety of the mother and child, and assisted BVAC providing guidance and support.

Police Chief Rabboh also recognized Detective Enriquez for his excellent work and outstanding dedication at the Police Department and his commitment to keep Bergenfield streets safe. He explained how Detective Enriquez successfully handled three criminal matters in town, and acknowledged him for a job well done.

Bergenfield Volunteer Ambulance Corp. Chief Ryan Shell also recognized the members of the BVAC for their actions during these emergencies. He presented CPR Save Awards to Deputy Chief Efraim Rudin, Alex Navia, Yvonne Bustamante, Shimmie Schwarcz, Childbirth Awards to Lt. Naftali Silvera, and Joseph Davis, and Lifesaving Awards to Aaron Mallin, Anjana Prakasam, Aryeh Lejtman, and Lt. Harsimranjeet Singh.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Councilperson Thomas Lodato | Congratulations and thank you to each of the individuals recognized and honored tonight. Because of you, the borough is a safer place, and you cannot put a value on the work you do. |
| Councilperson Buddy Deauna | I concur with Councilman Lodato's comments. Your service is fundamental to this borough, thank you. |
| Council President Domingo Almonte | Thank you for your service, it is appreciated. |
| Councilperson Ora Kornbluth | Thank you for your service and congratulations to all those that were recognized tonight. I also want to recognize the BVAC members who day in and day out are attending lifesaving calls, 24/7. They are volunteer, not paid. As their liaison, I see first hand the work they do. They are always there for the community. |

Councilperson Hernando Rivera

Tonight we honor the ones who run towards what others fear. When emergency calls break the silence, when the panic rises, the first responders answer without hesitation. They work with courage and step into danger with purpose, with unwavering resolve. Today we honor them not only for the lives saved or brought to life, but for the compassion they carry and the example they set for all of us here in Bergenfield. Thank you and God bless.

Councilperson Marc Pascual

Congratulations to all members of BVAC and PD that were involved in all these events that transpired in the first quarter of the year. You were given a wonderful gift, a talent, that not everyone could do or perform. You are wonderful, we appreciate all you do and the sacrifices you make. We are here to support you, and we pray for your safety. God bless.

Mayor Arvin Amatorio

I want to reiterate congratulations to the Police Officers that performed the heroic acts beyond their duties and congratulations to BVAC volunteers. This day is very special, because while all these individuals are professionals, we also learn from the students, and I want to congratulate the students that took it upon themselves to call 911 and stayed at the scene with someone who needed help. Congratulations to you, and congratulations to the parents, you raised them well.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a.) Carpenter/Resident **RE:** Request to Reserve Memorial Park Pavilion and Field for Birthday Party/Saturday, June 13, 2026/3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- b.) Nunez/Resident **RE:** Request to Reserve Memorial Park Pavilion for Family Gathering/Saturday, June 20, 2026/10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- c.) Murphy/Resident **RE:** Request to Reserve Memorial Park Pavilion/Sunday, May 3, 2026/2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Councilperson Pascual motioned to accept Correspondence. Councilperson Deauna seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

ORDINANCES

A. Adoption of Ordinances

Mayor Amatorio read the following into the Record:

The following ordinance published herewith was first read by title only on Tuesday, April 7, 2026 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center.

ORDINANCE 26-2664 – AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE SALARY RANGES OF EMPLOYEES NOT SUBJECTED TO UNIONIZED CONTRACTUAL UNITS OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD

ORDINANCE 26-2665 – BOND ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAKING OF VARIOUS PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF NEW ADDITIONAL OR REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY AND NEW AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLES, INCLUDING ORIGINAL APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT, IN, BY AND FOR THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, IN THE

COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$2,808,700 TO PAY THE COST THEREOF, TO MAKE A DOWN PAYMENT, TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS TO FINANCE SUCH APPROPRIATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS

ORDINANCE 26-2666 – ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK

Councilperson Rivera motioned to amend the salary ordinance to make the starting rate for all hourly wage employees to the \$15.92 minimum wage in accordance with State law. Councilperson Kornbluth seconded the motion to amend the ordinance.

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

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

Mayor Amatorio opened the meeting to public comments on Ordinances 26-2664 (as amended), 26-2665, and 26-2666.

No one came forward.

There being no one who wishes to be heard, Mayor Amatorio closed public comments.

Motion by Councilperson Rivera, second by Council President Almonte, to pass Ordinance 26-2664 as amended on second and final reading and is hereby adopted and notice of same shall be published according to law.

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

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|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

Motion by Councilperson Pascual, second by Council President Almonte, to pass Ordinance 26-2665 on second and final reading and is hereby adopted and notice of same shall be published according to law.

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

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|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

Motion by Councilperson Lodato, second by Councilperson Deauna, to pass Ordinance 26-2666 on second and final reading and is hereby adopted and notice of same shall be published according to law.

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

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|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

A. CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT RESOLUTION 26-126. 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.) **26-127/**To Approve Bill List
- b.) **26-128/**To Approve Temporary Emergency Appropriation
- c.) **26-129/**To Approve Escrow Funding Agreement with Ferdoni Realty LLC for 150 S. Washington
- d.) **26-130/**To Approve Veterans Tax Exemption – 32 Merritt Avenue
- e.) **26-131/**To Approve Veterans Tax Exemption – 77 Haring Street
- f.) **26-132/**To Approve Revised Proposal – Meltzer’s Brook Stream Clearing and Bank Stabilization Project
Rebid Services – T&M Associates

Motion by Councilperson Pascual to approve the Consent Resolution. Councilperson Rivera seconded the motion.

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

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|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

B. Resolutions

26-133/To Amend Resolution #26-124 to Hire Permanent Part-Time Laborers

Motion by Council President Almonte seconded by Councilperson Rivera that Resolution #26-133 be approved.

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

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

26-134/To Hire Part-Time Bus Driver and Cleaning Person – Maria Morales

Motion by Council President Almonte seconded by Councilperson Deauna that Resolution #26-134 be approved.

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

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|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Councilperson Lodato: | <i>aye</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>aye</i> |

26-135/To Hire Telecommunicator – Aaron Melendez

Motion by Councilperson Pascual seconded by Council President Almonte that Resolution #26-135 be approved.

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

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Committee/Department Reports

Motion offered by Council President Almonte that the Committee/Department Reports be spread upon the minutes in full and filed. Councilperson Lodato seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS II

Mayor Amatorio opened the meeting to Verbal Communications II and invited the public to comment on any subject, limited to five minutes per speaker.

No one came forward.

There being no one who wishes to be heard, Mayor Amatorio closed Verbal Communications II.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor and Council thanked all for coming this evening and reminded everyone of the 5K run this coming weekend.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Rivera, second by Councilperson Kornbluth, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Marie Quiñones-Wilson
Borough Clerk