

**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2026**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Arvin Amatorio, Council President Domingo Almonte, and Council members Thomas A. Lodato, Buddy Deauna, Ora Kornbluth, and Marc Pascual (*arrived at 8:24 p.m.*)

**ABSENT:** Councilmembers Thomas A. Lodato and Hernando Rivera

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

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:03 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**

Council President Domingo Almonte motioned to add Resolution #26-239 to Rescind Appointment – Alternate Municipal Court Judge and Resolution #26-240 to enter into Closed Session to discuss litigation and personnel matters. Councilperson Kornbluth seconded the motion. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

**PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Green and Peterson Incorporated (GPA) Presentation on Twin Boro Field Improvements – Phase II

Borough Engineer Mr. Tom Lemanowicz with Greenman-Pedersen Incorporated (GPI) presented the proposed Phase II improvements for Twin Boro Park. He explained that this isn't the last chance for comments, as there will be two sessions in the preliminary engineering phase, this being the first, and another opportunity during the design phase, which will follow this. The next meeting will be a publicly noticed meeting to all property owners within 200 feet of the site, which will be provided three weeks in advance. Mr. Lemanowicz further added that project information, including digital plans and exhibits, will be posted on the Borough website for public review. Mr. Lemanowicz stated that the project is being funded through a Transportation Alternatives Program Grant, also known as a TAP Grant, a federal funded program administered through the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The design cost, the construction cost, and the cost of construction administration is 100% refundable by the grant program. There is no cost to the borough. As for the project, the funding will pay for paths. Mr. Lemanowicz explained that there are

two sides to the project. The west side a series of paths that create a loop along the existing walkway to the field, but also connect to N. Queen Street and Woods Avenue. He explained these are all currently connected, but it is a dirt path. The project will implement asphalt paths, which is a hard service, but it is permeable, allowing water to flow. This will resolve the stormwater management regulations. On the east side, the current asphalt path will be resurfaced and continued to a new parking lot. There will also be bioretention basin that is required by the NJDEP regulations. He further explained that the paths will be lit with a bollard style lighting that will be dark-sky compliant, as required by Green Acres. Discussions have been held with Green Acres and they have no issue with the proposal. GPI will be sending the plans this week for their review.

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that that the presentation provided by Mr. Lemanowicz are phase II improvements. He explained that the existing area next to Dumont's field, the gravel area, is part of phase III improvements. He expressed that grant funds in excess of a million dollars have been received for phase III, which will include the building of courts, including basketball, tennis, pickleball courts, potentially a volleyball court, and a pavilion. The parking will eventually be located outside near the dog park, as well as the hockey rink area, for residents to park and use the walking paths to enter the park. This will help us utilize all the space. The current field house will include the bathrooms and the kitchen to expand the recreation space.

Mr. Lemanowicz stated there will also be mileposts along the paths. Marking posts will show every tenth of a mile. We also add maps. This will meet the stormwater management regulations, but the rerouting of paths will also be ADA compliant.

Mayor Amatorio inquired how many trees will be removed as a result of the improvements.

Mr. Lemanowicz stated that the project anticipates the removal of approximately a dozen trees. He explained that not many trees will be removed because the improvements will be made along the current paths that exist. It was confirmed that the current plan includes the removal of seven trees.

Mayor Amatorio suggested replanting trees in other areas to offset the trees removed.

Mr. Lemanowicz confirmed that the plans call for replanting, but this is all part of the preliminary engineering. The plans will probably be finalized for an early 2028 bid, which will include the final construction specifications. At that time, we will also review the trees being removed and replanting.

Mayor Amatorio requested that Mr. Lemanowicz review the timeline for the public.

Mr. Lemanowicz stated this is the end of the preliminary engineering phase. We will have another meeting and prepare reports that have to be submitted to the State. Their review, which is called exclusionary document, creates the next phase, which is the beginning of the final design phase. We go through proposals and agreements as part of that phase, then NJDOT needs to review the proposal. The process to review the agreements takes from three to four months before going into final design, then we have to submit to the State for final review and approvals. He expressed that we are looking at 2028 for the start of construction.

Mayor Amatorio expressed this is important to note, as there are other programs in the town such as the improvements to Coopers Pond, in which we cannot move ahead until we have State approval, even if the funds are available. He stated that perhaps we can start on phase III prior to phase II.

Mr. Gallo expressed that TAP grant projects take a long time to complete. He stated that if everyone recalls, Safe Routes to Schools took about six years to complete. The funding was available in 2012, but the project was completed in 2018.

#### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/BOROUGH ENGINEER

##### A. Engineering & Inspection Status Report

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that the road improvement program is moving along and is expected to be completed between late September and mid-October. Once Porter Avenue is done, this will finalize the entire 2026 road program. He expressed that the challenge has been the underlying pipework that has created some conflicts. While milling, the contractors hit two gas lines, which created some delays. Mr. Gallo explained that Borough inspectors investigate these issues, determine responsibility, and coordinate repairs before construction continues. He expressed that the road program is progressing significantly better than last year.

#### ORDINANCES

##### A. Adoption of Ordinances

Mayor Amatorio read into the record:

The following ordinances published herewith were first read by title only on Tuesday, August 18, 2026 and posted on the bulletin board of the municipal center.

#### **ORDINANCE 26-2668 – AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILOT) SERVICE CHARGE SCHEDULE**

#### **ORDINANCE 26-2673 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 232 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED “PROPERTY MAINTENANCE”**

#### **ORDINANCE 26-2674 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 136 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED “CONSTRUCTION CODES, UNIFORM”**

#### **ORDINANCE 26-2675 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 299 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED “VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC”**

Public Comments on Ordinances 26-2668, 26-2673, 26-2674, and 26-2675.

No one came forward.

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, to pass Ordinance 26-2668, on second and final reading and are 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>absent</i> |
| Council President Almonte: | <i>aye</i>    | Councilperson Pascual:   | <i>aye</i>    |

Motion by Councilperson Deauna, seconded by Council President Almonte, to pass Ordinances 26-2673, 26-2674, and 26-2675 on second and final reading and are 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>absent</i> |
| Council President Almonte: | <i>aye</i>    | Councilperson Pascual:   | <i>aye</i>    |

#### B. Introduction of Ordinances

Motion by Councilperson Deauna that the following ordinances be introduced and passed on first reading and setting October 6, 2026 at 8:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard as the date and time and the Council Chambers of the Bergenfield Borough Hall as the place for a hearing on said ordinances. Councilperson Kornbluth seconded the motion.

Mayor Amatorio read the titles of the Ordinances into the Record:

**ORDINANCE 26-2678 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 186 OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, ENTITLED “LAND DEVELOPMENT”**

**ORDINANCE 26-2679 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD, COUNTY OF BERGEN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AMENDING REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BLOCK 122, LOTS 1-14 – 60-90 WEST CHURCH STREET, 11-43 TYSON PLACE, 22-24 NORTH FRONT STREET, AND 31 NORTH DEMAREST AVENUE**

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>absent</i> |
| Council President Almonte: | <i>aye</i>    | Councilperson Pascual:   | <i>aye</i>    |

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

#### NEW BUSINESS

No unfinished business.

#### ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Borough Administrator Gallo stated that next week is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11. In conjunction with the Fire Department and emergency services, there will be a ceremony Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. at Cooper's Pond. The event will be publicly posted. He reported that we continue to move projects forward and we are working with the contractors to have plants installed around the parking lots and will have the plants in front Borough Hall replaced at the expense of the contractor. We are closing out the punch list items to complete the project by year end. He expressed that finishing the project has been challenging because contractors failed to adhere to the contract they signed. At the same time, Mr. Gallo is confident that the project will come to completion.

#### MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORT

Councilperson Lodato *absent*

Councilperson Deauna stated that he added the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee. He stated they have about \$7,160 in their budget and have been very busy coordinating trips. They are considering a November trip to Atlantic City and exploring the possibility of arranging a special bus for seniors to come in and provide IDs. A concern was raised about the landscaping in front of the post office.

Borough Administrator Gallo explained that the post office is federal property, so complaints are referred to the appropriate federal contacts, including Congressman Gottheimer's office, and the Borough continues to follow up with the post office. We contact them every couple of weeks.

Council President Almonte No report.

Councilperson Kornbluth expressed her sincere apologies in advance as she is unable to attend the September 11<sup>th</sup> ceremony, due to the start of the high holidays, as it coincides with the beginning of Rosh Hashanah. Her thoughts are with all the firefighters and emergency services personnel.

Councilperson Rivera *absent*

Councilperson Pascual No report.

Mayor Amatorio stated that he has been working with the Borough Administrator on the different and programs and projects in town.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

a.) Naylis/Board of Fire Officers RE: Personnel Action Letter dated August 26, 2026

b.) Bencosme/Resident

RE: Request to Reserve Memorial Park  
Pavilion/September 19, 2026/12:00 p.m. to 8:00  
p.m.

**MOTION** by Councilperson Pascual, second by Councilperson Deauna, to accept Correspondence. All present voting in favor, none opposed.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fred Salhberg resident, thanked Borough Administrator Corey Gallo for acting on a littering complaint he previously reported on Washington Avenue. He thanked him on the record for investigating and taking care of the matter. Mr. Salhberg also spoke about the incident at Memorial Park and stated that, if the person who intervened was indeed a good Samaritan and was injured while helping, the Borough should consider recognizing him and providing him an accolade.

Mary Sullivan, resident, inquired about work being done in the creek and if the vegetation would be cleared.

John Smith, resident, questioned when the Purple Heart and veterans' signs would be reinstalled now that the parking lot work has been completed.

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

Borough Administrator Gallo confirmed the creek is being cleaned out by the Department of Public Works, as they have been able to locate a device that works in cleaning the creek. The device will be rented for a month to continue to test it out and clean the brook. He further explained that the parking lot in the front of Borough Hall failed to meet DOT standards and needs to be redone. Some curbs also need to be replaced. This is a work in progress. Once this is all done, the signage will be posted in those areas.

#### OFFICIAL BUSINESS TO BE ACTED UPON:

##### A. CONSENT AGENDA

**CONSENT RESOLUTION 26-235.** 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. **26-236**/To Approve Bill List
- b. **26-237**/To Cancel Grant Balances

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, to approve the Consent Resolution #26-235.

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

Councilperson Lodato: *absent*  
Councilperson Deauna: *aye*

Councilperson Kornbluth: *aye*  
Councilperson Rivera: *absent*

Council President Almonte:           *aye*                      Councilperson Pascual:           *aye*

## B. RESOLUTIONS

**26-238/**To Approve Proposal – Core Testing on Porter Avenue – Atlas Material Testing & Consulting

Motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Deauna, that Resolution #26-238 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>absent</i> |
| Council President Almonte: | <i>recused</i> | Councilperson Pascual:   | <i>aye</i>    |

**26-239/**To Rescind Appointment – Alternate Municipal Court Judge John Meyer

Motion by Councilperson Deauna, seconded by Council President Almonte, that Resolution #26-239 be approved.

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

Borough Attorney Schettino explained the appointment has to be rescinded because there is no category for Alternate Judge. There can only be a temporary or an additional judge. The Borough's ordinance may need to be amended to create the position and prior approval is required from Superior Court. The position hours and compensation will need to be set by ordinance.

## COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Mayor and Councilmembers thanked all for coming and wished all a good night.

## CLOSED SESSION

**RESOLUTION 26-240/**Authorizing the Governing Body to Enter into Closed Executive Session to discuss:

- A.) Attorney-Client Privilege/Litigation Matters/Personnel
  - 1. Board of Health Personnel Matters
  - 2. Tortora v. Bergenfield
  - 3. Massey v. Bergenfield

Minutes will be taken of the meeting and released to the public at the time that the matter is resolved. After Closed Executive Session, the Mayor and Council will reconvene in the Executive Chambers to adjourn this public meeting.

On a motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Almonte, and all present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned to the Closed Session in the Executive Chambers at 8:41p.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on a motion by Councilperson Kornbluth, seconded by Councilperson Pascual, and unanimously carried, to adjourn this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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Marie Quiñones-Wilson  
Borough Clerk