

REGULAR MEETING
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COUNCIL MEETING ROOM – LOWER LEVEL

June 17, 2025

The following are the Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council that was held on Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was opened with the Inspiration and Pledge of Allegiance, led by the Municipal Clerk.

Mayor Farmer asked those present to stand for a moment of silence in honor of former Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes. She then read the following statement: "On behalf of Lawrence Township, we extend our deepest condolences to the family and friends of former Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes. Mr. Hughes dedicated many years of distinguished service to Mercer County, consistently championing the needs of all towns within our County. We are profoundly grateful for his unwavering commitment and leadership, which have had a direct and lasting impact on the Lawrence Township community in many ways. His legacy will be remembered fondly and with deep appreciation. Mayor Patricia Hendricks Farmer and the Lawrence Township Council." She then announced that State, County and Township flags will be lowered at half-mast tomorrow in his honor.

At the commencement of the meeting Mayor Farmer read the following statement of proper notice:

STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE: "Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Council being held on Tuesday, June 17, 2025, has been provided through the posting of the annual meeting schedule of said Council in accordance with Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act." Said Notice was forwarded to The Trentonian, The Times and The Princeton Packet on December 19, 2024.

The roll was then called as follows:

Present: Councilmembers Bobbitt, Kownacki, Perry and Mayor Farmer.
Absent: Councilwoman Santos.

Also in attendance were Kevin Nerwinski, Esq., Municipal Manager, and Arthur Sypek, Esq., Municipal Attorney.

Special Proclamations, Recognitions and Presentations

Mayor Farmer reported that there is an amendment to the agenda with regard to the Proclamation in Celebration of Fredrick "Fred" Jacob Tuccillo's 99th Birthday, which will be held at a later time.

Mayor Farmer stated that The Mayor's Task Force will have a brief update regarding the Community Center. She then turned the floor over to Ms. Bonnie Giglio for the presentation.

Ms. Bonnie Giglio, member of the Mayor's Task Force, greeted Council and all those in attendance. She began by reviewing the reason why Council created the Mayor's Task Force, which was established through Resolution No. 346-24. Ms. Giglio stated that the Task Force has gathered data from many people throughout the community over the past six months, culminating with an online survey and a community meeting on May 13th. She indicated that a community member, with expertise in education research, graciously volunteered to help sort and analyze all of the collected data. Ms. Giglio then shared with Council the origin of the collected data, and stated that it is still being analyzed by the Task Force, and they hope to have more information to present to Council at next month's meeting.

Mayor Farmer thanked Ms. Giglio for her presentation, as well as the Lawrence resident for agreeing to sort and analyze the collected data. She then introduced Mr. Fred Vereen, member of the Board of Directors of *Lawrence Non-Profit Housing, Inc.*, who will give an update on the Eggerts Crossing Village Improvements.

Mr. Fred Vereen thanked Council, and stated that he is present tonight to represent the Board of Directors of Lawrence Non-Profit Housing Inc., the sponsors of Eggerts Crossing Village. He stated that in 2022, Lawrence Non-Profit Housing Inc. paid off and then refinanced their 48-year mortgage, and informed Council that they agreed to periodically provide updates on the improvements being made within Eggerts Crossing Village, which is the reason for tonight's presentation. He explained that PRD Management Company has been managing Eggerts Crossing ever since he stepped down from the position, and indicated that they are doing an excellent job. Mr. Vereen passed out photocopies of the improvements that have been done thus far, explaining that there has been an expansion to the office and community space used by the "Every Child Valued" after school program, an updating of underground piping of the entire complex, the installation of new hose bibs throughout the facility, the installation of new HVAC units through the complex, an updating of the camera system for resident's safety, and an updating of the kitchens and bathrooms. He next reported that they have provided job training workshops, youth tutoring programs, financial literacy classes, and hosted seasonal gatherings, cultural celebrations and wellness fairs. Finally, Mr. Vereen invited Council and community members to visit Eggerts Crossing Village and view the developments firsthand.

Mayor Farmer thanked Mr. Vereen for his presentation, and stated that as a proud member of the Eggerts Crossing community, she is aware of the work that has been done and the improvements currently taking place, and she is excited to hear about the clubs being reintroduced for the benefit of the children of Eggerts Crossing.

Councilman Jim Kownacki expressed that looking at the pictures of Eggerts Crossing's old-style kitchens reminded him of the Fish Fry's they used to have in that space, and joked that he is ready to come back and cook the hush-puppies for him once more.

Mr. Vereen joked that he is ready for him to come back. He then stated that Mr. Kownacki was Mayor when the Town passed the proclamation to name his street "Fred Vereen Road," and thanked Mr. Kownacki once again for the honor.

Public Participation

Mr. Greg Puliti asked when the public will see a Resolution regarding the terms of the settlement pertaining to "Resolution No. 239-25 (18-H) Authorizing a Closed Session of Council Immediately Following the Regular Meeting to Discuss Litigation – Caponi, et al. v Caloiaro, et al."

Mr. Nerwinski responded that they have not yet received information with regard to settlement paperwork needing to be executed by the Mayor or the Governing Body, so as soon as the information is received and executed it will be released to the public.

Attorney Arthur Sypek further responded that it is technically an active case and the Township has not received any of the documentation, but he is hopeful that by the next meeting Council will have information to share.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that on Friday, May 29th, he received information from the Township's attorney with regard to litigation that is captioned, "Caponi, et al. v Caloiaro, et al," which stated that the matter was scheduled for trial on June 2nd, but apparently, he explained, the parties had gotten together and attempted a resolution. Mr. Nerwinski further explained that on Monday, the Township received a request from the insurer that the Governing Body must convene to discuss any proposed resolution to the case. Mr. Nerwinski indicated to the attorney and to the insurance carrier that the next Council Meeting was scheduled for June 17th, where this information would be discussed. He relayed that the Superior Court Judge indicated this timeframe was unacceptable, and the Governing Body must gather on an emergent basis. Mr. Nerwinski reported that the Township was able to schedule a Special Meeting on June 5th at 1:00 p.m., after which Council went into a closed session for litigation purposes to discuss the matter. He revealed that, as it is still technically pending at this point, it cannot yet be discussed with the public. However, he asked the record to reflect that, although this case was not on the agenda, the banner was "litigation" and litigation is one of the subject matters that are

appropriate for Executive Session, and for purposes of clarity, the matter was "Caponi, et al. v Caloiaro, et al."

Mr. Nerwinski and Mr. Sypek both agreed that they no longer have need for an Executive Session tonight as Mr. Nerwinski has adequately covered their concerns, and they are still awaiting the documentation regarding the exact terms of the settlement.

Ms. Martha Friend stated that, on behalf of *Lawrence Neighbors Together*, she wished to thank those involved in the "First Annual Lawrence Pride Fest," with specific recognition to Health Department employee Aimee Landau, Chief Paramedic Chrissy Vincent along with two EMT technicians from her department who secured ambulance services and cheered the runners, Police Chief Reading and Captain Lech, Officer Everest and former Police Chief Chris Longo, Township Clerk Tonya Carter and her staff, Manager Nerwinski, the Department of Public Works, and all of the volunteers and attendees for their support. She then encouraged everyone to check out the Lawrence Pride Fest website to view the expansive list of supporters of their festival.

Mayor Farmer commended *Lawrence Neighbors Together* and the "Lawrence Pride Fest" for a successful event and creating goodwill within the community. She stated that she attended and had a wonderful time.

Review and Revisions of Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Bobbitt, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, the Agenda was amended to remove Resolution 239-25 (18.H.18) Authorizing a Closed Session of Council Immediately Following the Regular Meeting to Discuss Litigation – Caponi, et al. v Caloiaro, et al, as there is no longer a need for discussion. Additionally, on a motion by Mayor Farmer, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, the Agenda was amended to remove 16.A Agenda Meetings – Discussion Regarding the Implementation of a Caucus Meeting Including their Purpose, Scheduling Logistics and OPMA Compliance, and have it placed on the July 15th Agenda.

Ayes: Councilmembers Bobbitt, Kownacki, Perry and Mayor Farmer.
Nays: None.
Absent: Councilwoman Santos.
Abstain: None.

Adoption of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Bobbitt, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 18, 2025 were approved without corrections on the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Bobbitt	X					X	
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Ms. Perry	X						
Ms. Santos				X			
Mayor Farmer	X						

On a motion by Mr. Bobbitt, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 4, 2025 were approved without corrections on the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Bobbitt	X					X	
Mr. Kownacki	X						
Ms. Perry	X						X
Ms. Santos				X			
Mayor Farmer	X						

Awarding or Rejecting of Bids

On a motion by Mr. Bobbitt, seconded by Ms. Perry, Resolution (9-A) Authorizing Award of Bid 25-07:2025 Residential Concrete Sidewalk Program, was presented for adoption.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this is a part of the Township's Sidewalk Improvement Program, and because of the number of participants and the scope of the work, we were able to calculate that the projected contract would be \$82,937.00. This is money that will be paid by the participating property owners over a period of five years.

Resolution No. 209-25

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, June 10, 2025, bids were received and publicly opened for the project known as **Bid 25-07: 2025 Residential Concrete Sidewalk Program**; and

WHEREAS, ten (10) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was Manny Concrete, LLC who submitted a bid in the amount of \$82,937.00; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:50-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the accounts to be charged are;

Acct.	Ord. No.	Name	Amount
C-04-55-501-247	2468-24	Various Road Improvements	\$58,200.00
C-04-55-501-250	2468-24	Various Road Improvements	\$17,467.07
C-04-55-501-242	2468-24	Various Road Improvements	\$7,269.93

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that pursuant to the recommendations of the Municipal Engineer, the Mayor and Municipal Clerk are hereby authorized to execute a contract with Manny Concrete, LLC, 2 Beach Haven Way, Waretown, NJ 08758 in the amount of \$82,937.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Manager is hereby authorized to draft the necessary agreement, subject to the approval of the Municipal Attorney as to form and content thereof.

Adopted: June 17, 2025

Ayes: Councilmembers Bobbitt, Kownacki, Perry and Mayor Farmer.
 Nays: None.
 Absent: Councilwoman Santos.
 Abstain: None.

Introduction of Ordinances

There was no introduction of ordinances.

Adoption of Ordinances

Mayor Farmer read by title, an ordinance entitled, "ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2449-23 BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE, COUNTY OF MERCER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, IN ORDER TO REVISE THE DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPROVEMENT HEREIN – Improvements to Municipal Buildings: Council Chamber Improvements Including Furniture and Audio-Visual Updates" and "Townhall Interior Office Painting, Office Furniture and Storage."

Mr. Nerwinski reported that this is a budgetary requirement, not an expenditure of new funds. He explained that it is a reallocation of previously approved funding to provide for renovations to the Council Chamber, which revises the capital budget in accordance with the New Jersey Budget Law.

Ordinance No. 2497-25

ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2449-23
BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE, COUNTY OF MERCER,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, IN ORDER TO REVISE THE DESCRIPTION
OF THE IMPROVEMENT HEREIN

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey as follows:

Section 1:

- a. Section 1 (c) of Ordinance 2449-23, finally adopted May 16, 2023, Ordinance 2453-23, finally adopted July 18, 2023, Ordinance 2489-25 finally adopted April 1, 2025, be and are hereby amended to add the following purposes:

Improvements to Municipal Buildings: "Council Chamber Improvements including Furniture and Audio-Visual Updates"

Improvements to Municipal Buildings: "Townhall Interior Office Painting, Office Furniture, and Storage"

Section 2:

The capital budget of the Township of Lawrence is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this ordinance to the extent of inconsistency herewith. The resolution in the form promulgated by the Local Finance Board showing full detail of the amended capital budget and capital program as approved by the Director of Local Government Services is on file with the Clerk and is available there for inspection.

Section 3:

This amending ordinance shall take effect twenty (20) days after the first publication thereof after final adoption, as provided by Law.

Adopted: June 17, 2025

The Ordinance No. 2492-25 was approved on the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Bobbitt	X					X	
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Ms. Perry	X						
Ms. Santos				X			
Mayor Farmer	X						

Manager's Report –

Township Manager Kevin Nerwinski submitted invoice listings for the month of June 2025 in the amount of \$2,583,844.05.

Mr. Nerwinski shared that the Council Meeting Room is currently under renovations. He noted that the Public Works Department has completed a significant amount of work, valued at approximately \$20,000, which has lowered the Township's original cost estimate. He wished to publicly thank Public Works, and relayed that this savings will provide the Township with the ability to purchase the chairs that they feel are appropriate for that space. Mr. Nerwinski stated that the Township is on schedule to return to the Council Meeting Room in September; however, it is dependent upon the arrival of the chairs.

Mr. Nerwinski reported that Lawrence Township CFO Peter Kiriakatis will be retiring December 1, 2025, and an advertisement for his replacement has been published. He indicated that responses have been received, which he is sharing with Mr. Sypek, who is acting as a point-person. He clarified that this is a Governing Body appointment; however, he recommends that interviews be set up with candidates who meet all of the criteria, and that it be done sooner rather than later on a scrolling basis. Mr. Nerwinski stated that he is hopeful a candidate can be employed by September 1st in order to have the opportunity to spend time with the current CFO, thereby creating a seamless transition.

Mr. Nerwinski announced that last night, Township Planner Beth McManus provided the Township Planning Board with a presentation pertaining to the 2025 Fourth Round Housing Plan, which is now posted on the Township website. He reported that the housing plan was passed by the Planning Board and submitted to the State for review and certification, which may take a few months. He relayed that this was significant work by the Ms. McManus and the Planning Board.

Attorney's Report –

Mr. Sypek stated that he had nothing to report, other than to say, per Mr. Nerwinski's 2025 Fourth Round Housing Plan announcement, there will be a Resolution that will need to be adopted, which will most likely take place at the July Council Meeting. He relayed that it would be Council's discretion whether they would like Ms. McManus to provide a brief presentation that evening. Although it is a complicated issue, he believes that the Township has met all of the requisite criteria.

Mayor Farmer stated that she agrees with having Ms. McManus come before Council for a presentation and to answer any questions that they may have. She believes this will be helpful to both Council and the general public.

Clerk's Report –

Municipal Clerk, Tonya Carter, reported that the June 10th Primary Election was a success, and everyone did a great job. She stated that the County worked cohesively with the Clerk's Office, and she is now looking forward to the next election.

She then publicly introduced newly appointed Deputy Municipal Clerk, Nicole Hillman, who was not present at the previous Council meeting.

Unfinished Business –

There was no unfinished business.

New Business –

Mayor Farmer wished to remind everyone that Lawrence Township's Juneteenth celebration will be held tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall Steps. She stated that Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson will be the keynote speaker, and the Lawrence Township Gospel Choir will perform at the event.

Public Participation (3-minute limitation per speaker) –

There was no public participation.

Resolutions

Resolution Nos. 210-25 (18-C.1) though 238-25 (18-H.17) were approved, along with Resolution No. 240-25 (18-H.19), by the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Mr. Bobbitt	X					X	
Mr. Kownacki	X						
Ms. Perry	X						X
Ms. Santos				X			
Mayor Farmer	X						

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

Council Initiatives/Liaison Reports –

Councilwoman Perry reported that the final findings with regard to the Fire Survey will be presented to Council on July 15th, with a final determination at the August 19th Council meeting, after which they will move forward to award the bid.

Mayor Farmer relayed that the Planning Board met last night, where they reviewed and voted on the housing study, which will come before Council at the July 15th Council meeting. Additional information is available to the public under "Planning Board" on the Lawrence Township website.

Councilman Bobbitt wished to congratulate Councilman Kownacki on the success of the Memorial Day Parade, stating that it was a wonderful event, and he always keeps everyone on track. Mr. Kownacki received a round of applause, after which Council thanked him for his efforts.

Written Communications –

Mayor Farmer stated that she received a Proclamation from State Senator Shirley Turner regarding Lawrence Township's upcoming Juneteenth Celebration. Mayor Farmer then read aloud the accompanying letter, which stated the importance of this event for honoring the historical significance of the celebration, and her thanks to Lawrence Township, as well as the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, for organizing this important event.

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tonya D. Carter, Municipal Clerk

Attest:

Patricia Farmer, Mayor