

**BOROUGH OF KEYPORT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025, 7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

SUNSHINE LAW NOTICE: Read by Municipal Clerk

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council, Borough of Keyport, held on the above date in Borough Hall Council Chambers, Keyport, NJ, pursuant to the Annual Notice on file with the Borough Clerk forwarded to the Asbury Park Press, and Newark Star Ledger and posted on the Bulletin Board in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L.1975, c.231.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Councilmember Gross, Councilmember McNamara, Councilmember Merla, Councilmember Reilly, Council President Vecchio, Mayor Araneo
Councilmember Brady was absent

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

SWEARING IN CEREMONY

Mayor Araneo administered the Oath of Office to Police Officer Valerie Aguirre
Mayor Araneo administered the Oath of Office to Police Lt. Robert Hassmiller

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Araneo delivered the Proclamation in observance of Overdose Awareness Month

COMMITTEE REPORTS

(Councilmember is lead or co-lead liaison of Committees in bold)

Councilmember Brady: Environmental, Recreation/Senior Center, Municipal Alliance, Fire/First Aid/OEM, Green Team

No Report – Councilmember Brady was absent

Councilmember Gross: KBBC, Police, Recycling, Health/Registrar/Construction/Fire Bureau/Code Enforcement/Zoning

Police

- Read Police calls for service report

Registrar

- Read Registrar treasury report

KBBC

- The Car Show was a great success
- Light Up the Bay event at the waterfront on Saturday, August 30th

Councilmember McNamara: Public Works/Water-Sewer, Green Team, Cannabis, NPP, Finance/Grants, Recreation/Senior Center

Public Works/Water-Sewer

- Power washing and cleaning of fishing pier
- Support of events
- Street Sweeping schedule posted on Borough website
- Leaf and branch pickup scheduled for September
- Water main break by Town & Country Diner, required traffic diversion
- Provided support for Second Street and Maple Place road projects
- Call Public Works at 732-739-5428 M-F 8AM-3:30PM to report utility disruptions
- Police Department non-emergency number 732-264-0706 after hours
- Submit Concern now on main page of Borough website

Green Team

- Will be busy soon

Cannabis

- Taxes collected last quarter were \$55,000; year-to-date \$102,420

Recreation

- Summer Recreation program held; small number of campers but a great foundation
- Mini-Camp was canceled due to low enrollment

- Movie Nights had some cancelations due to Mother Nature
- Town-Wide Yard Sale September 13th & 14th
- Keyport 5k September 20th – sign-ups available
- Trunk or Treat Saturday, October 18th
- Day of the Dead, November 1st

Other

- National Night Out was well attended – thank you to all who helped make it a great success
- More municipalities approving a resolution opposing the William Transco Pipeline; attended Old Bridge council meeting where they approved a resolution opposing the project as well.
- Participated in GovPilot application training

Councilmember Merla: Planning Board, Redevelopment, Public Works/Water-Sewer, Harbor Commission

Planning Board

- Meeting on August 28th at 7PM

Redevelopment

- No report
- Met with Borough Administrator

Harbor Commission

- Attended meeting with Council President Vecchio

KBBC

- Attended meeting
- Attended Car Show which was a great success; thanked all involved

Public Works/Water-Sewer

- DPW workers are out there every day
- Prayers for Bill's dad

Other

- Following resignation, thanked School Board Member Jack Hausmann for his time served

Councilmember Reilly: Finance/Grants, Fire/First Aid/OEM, Police, Municipal Alliance, Cannabis

Fire/First Aid/OEM

- First aid calls for service report
- OEM and CERT will organize tabletop exercise in September
- Emergency Operation Plan for the Borough
- Fire Department thanks everyone for a successful Fair

Finance/Grants

- First Bond Ordinance includes various items discussed in Finance meetings throughout 2025
 - Police Department requested IT and telecommunications equipment, and digital speed sign
 - Various road improvement projects
- Second Bond Ordinance includes vehicles and equipment for water sewer utilities
 - These items have been requested for a number of years
 - CFO granted request following debt payoff and all Finance Committee members agreed
- Resolution #25-235 Shared Service with Keyport Public Schools on the agenda
 - The SLEO III will be paid completely by the school this year
- Resolution #25-236 Shared Service Agreement with Keyport Public Schools for grounds maintenance on the agenda
 - The Borough will now be reimbursed in accordance with the agreement
- Resolution #25-225 JIF membership renewal
 - Keyport compliant last two years due in large part to BA and managers of various departments
 - Due to Keyport's efforts, JIF has implemented incentive program to get other municipalities in compliance
- Concerns raised by council regarding legal fees
 - OPRA requests alone first 6 months - \$5,000
 - \$3,300 for lawsuit tossed out earlier this year
 - \$21,692 in legal expenses for items falling outside of the retainer, including editing charter fishing boat agreement to Cass Street litigation

- Grants:
 - Fireman's Park - multiple grants awarded over \$2 million for promenade and bulkhead
 - Water main improvements \$2.3 million
 - Beach Park ADA improvements \$167,000
 - These are just high lights, there are many more

Council President Vecchio: Harbor Commission, NPP, Finance/Grants, Redevelopment

NPP

- First Street gate at Beach Park has been added
- Other locks have been fixed
- Resolution #25-226 for Year 5 Plan is on this meeting agenda

Harbor Commission

- Harbor Commission met and is now in full-swing preparation for the Snapper Contest on Saturday, September 13th

Mayor Araneo: Library, Cultural/Civic, Mayors Wellness Campaign, Planning Board, KBBC, Green Team

Library

- Color Our World Summer Reading going very well
- Toddler Time duck visit
- Presentation Amazing Minerals – Geology Museum
- Keyport Recreation Camp visited twice
- Abundant Life Child Development Center visited
- New website is up
- Donated statue has been placed in the rock garden
- Thanked Garden Club for arrangement
- Ten volunteers put in over 100 hours
- Holding art display contest with the Arts Society - bricks painted as book covers
- Friends of Library book sale

KBBC

- Revision of bylaws coming in September
- Received quotes for replacing garbage cans in business district on W. Front Street
- Looking into doing quarterly cleanup – weed control, power washing, in business district
- Last summer events:
 - 8/30 Light up the Bay 6pm-9pm at the waterfront
 - 9/6 first Italian Festival 12-7pm; approximately 32 vendors/food trucks; all businesses encouraged to participate
 - Providing Keyport Cash to bring people into the businesses
- KBBC approved to give 125 Keyport Cash \$10 certificates to kids participating in Snapper Contest
- Working on visual improvements and “Open” signs on business that are closed; asked BA to look into ordinances

Other

- Conference call today with Governor Murphy's office and others to discuss Hurricane Erin
 - Hurricane will cause high waves, rip tides and coastal flooding expected
 - Recommendation to close beaches and boat ramp Thursday evening into Friday
 - OEM creating post to share online
 - DPW closing off access to boat ramp
 - Kayaks to be removed from beach during this time
- Keyport Fire Department holding our 9/11 memorial event on American Legion Drive at 7PM
 - Advise Tom Gallo prior to September 11th if you would like to speak at the event

Borough Administrator Kim Humphrey – reported on the following:

- Improvements to Second Street project going smoothly
 - Lead lines weak so failures are happening
 - Sediment in lines can be an issue – call numbers Councilmember McNamara provided earlier
 - Report a Concern button on website can be used as well
- Fireman's Park Bulkhead Improvements
 - Further permitting has been approved

- Cedar Street Park is in the punch list phase – electrical improvements possible if funds remain available
- Three grants pending:
 - NJDOT Clark Street – address resident concerns
 - BPU Community Energy grant – something new
 - NJDEP technical assistance planning and design grant - \$2 million; lead lines have to be replaced by 2031 and we are seeking funding
- Beach Park – cement issue with cracking and scaling being monitored
- GovPilot – for a month – 83 concerns reported by residents to date
- Thank you to our summer employees for their help
- County street sweeping of County roads done – reverse 911 had gone out to move cars
- Boat Ramp closure
- Try to get kayaks pulled off the beach
- DPW Superintendent, who was also an OEM Coordinator for many years, knows what needs to be done to get things out of the way when it comes to tides, wind, and flooding

Councilmember Merla – asked about GovPilot and if Borough Administrator would get the information to residents using a water bill insert.

Mayor Araneo asked the Borough Administrator to address concerns that were posted on social media relative to her part-time position with borough of Englishtown.

Borough Administrator Humphrey summarized her responsibility to Keyport and now a part-time position with Englishtown. She will give to Englishtown between five to ten hours per week, on her own time, and after work on Wednesdays and weekends. She is happy to discuss this with anyone.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Meeting was opened to the public for comments on agenda items only.

Opened: 7:36PM Motion by Merla, Carried by Reilly with Ayes by all present

Elmer J. Graham, Jr., St. Peter’s Place – asked for an explanation of Resolution #25-224 which the Borough Administrator/QPA provided; every five years the Governor will increase the threshold for contracts. As the QPA, she said she runs audits, reviews every purchase, ensures quotes are received.

Michael Lane, First Street – commented regarding Resolution #25-234 regarding the standpipe asking why we need a resolution now. He said there should have been fines and that there are other conditions of approval which were not adhered to.

The Borough Attorney explained the MOU sets forth specific deadlines and consequences for the developer if those are not met. The Borough Administrator commented regarding the standpipe requirement. Mr. Lane asked why the resolution references Mariner’s Village when the issue is the standpipe.

Closed: 7:44PM Motion by Merla, Carried by Reilly, with Ayes by all present

CONSENT AGENDA

(All resolutions listed hereunder will be enacted in one motion. Any person may request that an item be removed for separate consideration.)

- R2025-218 Payment of Bills Listed on the July 25, 2025 Bills List
- R2025-219 Payment of Bills Listed on the August 8, 2025 Bills List
- R2025-220 Payment of Bills Listed on the August 19, 2025 Bills List
- R2025-221 Correcting the Numbers of Previously Adopted Resolutions
- R2025-222 Approving the Corrective Action Plan for the 2024 Municipal Audit
- R2025-223 Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit
- R2025-224 Increasing the Bid Threshold for Contracts Subject to Public Bidding under the Local Public Contracts Law
- R2025-225 Renewal of Membership in the Monmouth Municipal Joint Insurance Fund
- R2025-226 Authorizing Designated Improvements as Part of the Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP) Revised Year 5 Implementation Plan
- R2025-227 Authorizing a Water/Sewer Bill Adjustment for 82 Highway 35 Due to a Water Leak
- R2025-228 Authorizing Municipal Auction of Surplus Property
- R2025-229 Appointment of Municipal Alliance Committee Member

- R2025-230 Authorizing Keyport Bayfront Business Cooperative (KBBC) to Conduct a St. Patrick's Parade
- R2025-231 Authorizing Use of Borough Property by Friends of the Keyport Library and the Keyport Public Library for a Book Sale/Blings and Things too Event
- R2025-232 Authorizing Use of Borough Property by Friends of the Keyport Library and the Keyport Public Library for a Scarecrow Contest Fundraiser Winners Event
- R2025-233 Approving Road Closures for Keyport-Matawan Elks BPOE 2030
- R2025-234 Authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding with 375 West Front Street, LLC Regarding a Cooperative Effort for the Construction of a Standpipe System
- R2025-235 Authorizing the Borough to Enter into a Shared Services Agreement with the Keyport Public Schools for the Use of School Resource Officer/Special Law Enforcement Officers in the Keyport Public Schools
- R2025-236 Authorizing the Borough to Enter into a Shared Services Agreement with the Keyport Board of Education for Snow Plowing, Grounds and Field Maintenance Services

Councilmember McNamara questioned the payment of an invoice on the August 19th Payment of Bills Resolution for a seminar she was enrolled in and states she missed. She doesn't know about it and wants to get more information. Questions she had regarding the 357 W. Front Street resolution were previously addressed.

Motion to remove R2025-220 from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration made by McNamara, carried by Gross

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
 Nays:
 Abstain:
 Absent: Brady

Motion to remove R2025-234 from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration made by Vecchio, carried by Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
 Nays:
 Abstain:
 Absent: Brady

Motion to remove R2025-229 from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration made by Merla, carried by Reilly

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
 Nays:
 Abstain:
 Absent: Brady

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Motion to approve resolutions R2025-218 through R2025-238 on the Consent Agenda, pulling R2025-220, R2025-234 and R2025-229 for separate consideration

MM: Reilly 2nd: Gross

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
 Nays:
 Abstain:
 Absent: Brady

Motion to approve resolution R2025-220, pulling invoice #25-00889 for NJLM seminar

MM: Vecchio 2nd: McNamara

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
 Nays:
 Abstain:
 Absent: Brady

Motion to approve resolution R2025-234 regarding MOU for 357 W Front Street

MM: Merla 2nd: Reilly

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly
Nays:
Abstain: Vecchio
Absent: Brady

Motion to approve resolution R2025-229 Municipal Alliance Committee Appointment

MM: McNamara 2nd: Gross

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays: Merla
Abstain:
Absent: Brady

PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

1. Ordinance No. 2025-11 – Street Vacation Policies and Procedures

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT, IN THE COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING BOROUGH CODE CHAPTER XVI (STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND SANITATION) BY ADDING SECTION 16-9 TO PROVIDE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING STREET VACATION REQUESTS**

1a. Motion to Open Public Hearing at 7:53 PM MM: Vecchio 2nd: Merla

Elmer J. Graham, Jr., St. Peter’s Place – asked for an explanation which the Borough Attorney provided: This ordinance sets forth a very specific procedure for the process of vacating streets that are perhaps no longer needed by the municipality, such as a paper street. This establishes the procedures so everyone knows the process.

Mike Lane, First Street – commented regarding the previous abandoning of a portion of Atlantic Street and the impact it had on surrounding residents. He asked how you define adjacent properties and requested the ordinance include notification to those within a 200-foot radius.

Borough Attorney – explained the ordinance as drafted is compliant with State guidelines.

1b. Motion to Close Public Hearing at 7:59PM MM: Reilly 2nd: Vecchio
1c. Motion to adopt Ordinance MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla
Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays: McNamara
Abstain:
Absent: Brady

1d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted MM: Reilly 2nd Merla, all in favor

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

1. Ordinance – Amending Technical Review Committee

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT, IN THE COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING BOROUGH CODE CHAPTER XXV (LAND USE REGULATIONS), ARTICLE III (LAND USE PROCEDURES), SECTION 25-3-30 (TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE)**

1a. Motion to introduce:
MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Brady

1b. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as introduced for a public hearing:

MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla Ayes: All present Nays:

2. Ordinance – Bond Ordinance – Various Capital Improvements

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS BY THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT, APPROPRIATING THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF \$3,371,250 THEREFOR, INCLUDING A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$155,972.22 EXPECTED TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$3,210,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF**

2a. Motion to introduce:

MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent: Brady

2b. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as introduced for a public hearing:

MM: Reilly 2nd: Vecchio Ayes: All present Nays:

3. Ordinance – Bond Ordinance – Various Water/Sewer Utility Improvements

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR VARIOUS WATER / SEWER UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS BY THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT, APPROPRIATING THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF \$665,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$665,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE THE COST THEREOF**

3a. Motion to introduce:

MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent: Brady

3b. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as introduced for a public hearing:

MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla Ayes: All present Nays:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the July 15, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

MM: Vecchio 2nd: Gross Ayes: All present Nays:

Councilmember McNamara Motioned to amend previously approved June 17, 2025 council meeting minutes to include her verbatim statement into those minutes.

Council President Vecchio said that she is not opposed to including the statement. However, the written statement provided by Councilmember McNamara is not verbatim as to what was said during the meeting. She requested the written statement be amended and resubmitted for the next council meeting for approval.

Mayor Araneo pointed out that R2025-230 on the Consent Agenda was approved with a rain date and requested to amend the approval removing the rain date.

Motion to amend the approval of R2025-230 taking out the rain date moved by Reilly, carried by Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Gross, McNamara, Merla, Reilly, Vecchio

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent: Brady

REPORTS

1. Municipal Clerk's Report for July 2025
2. Tax/Water/Sewer Collector's Report for July 2025
3. Board of Health Treasurer's Report for July 2025
4. Building Department Report for July 2025
5. Municipal Court Report for July 2025

MM: Reilly 2nd: Merla Ayes: All present Nays:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Meeting was opened to the public for comments.

Opened: 8:07PM MM: Merla 2ND: Vecchio

John Merla, Broad Street – commented regarding Councilmember Reilly's report – one of the best reports he's ever heard; remarked he was not a fan of the Borough Administrator when she was first hired and now sees the hard work and has changed his mind. Many municipalities have employees that work additional jobs. He expressed disgust regarding comments and behavior of First Amendment auditors in town recently, specifically toward an employee of Front Street Pizza and Borough Police Officers. He commended the officers and Chief Ferm for his leadership. Mr. Merla noted that two weeks later, Officer Scully assisted in saving someone's life and he is proud of him.

Alissa Pecora, Chingarora – had questions about the bond ordinances and asked if there is any way residents can see a specific breakdown as to where the money is actually going. Stated she looks forward to being a member of the Municipal Alliance Committee.

Elmer J. Graham, Jr., St. Peter's Place – thanked the Mayor and the Police Department for an outstanding job. He commented regarding We Care Adult Care, the bowling tournament they are having in September, and urged everyone to look into it. He encouraged membership in American Legion Raritan Post 23 which meets first Thursday of every month.

Vinny Kyne, E. Front Street – has been a resident since 2007; commented regarding development becoming a hot ticket – especially the waterfront; he remarked on the resolution pertaining to the waterfront subdivision and addressed Councilmember Merla about having an interest in the properties along the waterfront; the subdivision should have been discussed in an open and transparent manner; he mentioned an area of 8 Front Street that was dug up some time ago and is still just gravel and dirt.

Mike Lane, W. Front Street – feels the report given by the Borough Administrator on current activities is missing a status update on all issues being worked on.

Elmer J. Graham, Jr. – commented the Mayor and Borough Administrator are doing an outstanding job and he feels they are very transparent.

Sandy Marion, Perry Street – believes Councilmember Merla and Council President Vecchio always have the best intentions for our town.

Elmer J. Graham, Jr. – seconds Ms. Marion's comments.

Christian Bolte, Broadway – commented regarding the Borough Administrator taking on a second job and asked how that came about; asked if everyone has read what is going on in Englishtown. The Borough Attorney said we are not addressing personnel issues, the Administrator gave a statement at the beginning of the meeting.

Resident of W. Front Street asked if the Borough has increased the rent for the Post Office.

Closed: 8:31PM MM: Merla 2ND: Reilly

The Borough Attorney read the Closed Session Resolution

EXECUTIVE SESSION

R2025-237 - Authorizing a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b for the purpose of discussing matters related to: personnel pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(8), and matters falling within the attorney-client privilege pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(1) Aeromarine redevelopment.

MM: Reilly 2nd: Vecchio Ayes: All present Nays:

Closed Session began at 8:40 following a short break.

Motion to reconvene to Open Session at 9:18PM, moved by Vecchio, carried by Merla with ayes by all present.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn: 9:18PM MM: Reilly 2nd: Vecchio