

BOROUGH OF KEYPORT

MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026, 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 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 Brady, Councilmember Kyne, Council President McNamara, Councilmember Merla, Councilmember Pecora, Mayor Araneo. Councilmember Bergen was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

PROMOTIONAL APPOINTING RESOLUTIONS

R2026-160 Authorizing the Promotional Appointment of a Police Sergeant of the Borough of Keyport Police Department – *Patrick Quirk*

MM: Kyne 2nd: Brady

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

R2026-161 Authorizing the Promotional Appointment of a Police Sergeant of the Borough of Keyport Police Department – *Vito Koempel, Jr.*

MM: Merla 2nd: McNamara

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Araneo administered the Oath of Office to Patrick Quirk and Vito Koempel, Jr.

Mayor Araneo read an Aeromarine Update; NJDEP and NJDOH convened community meeting on Sunday, May 17th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

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

- Environmental – April 11th Beach Sweeps collected 580 lbs. garbage, two full bins of recycling; discussed salt storage ordinance; round-tabled Aeromarine issue. Next meeting Monday, June 22nd.
- Recreation – Stars and Stripes food truck festival this weekend; beer truck profits benefit American Legion; Bayshore Patriotic Bike Ride is next event, taking place on Henry Hudson Trail near Main Street Park. Patriotic House Decorating contest – sign up form is on Facebook; Pride Event at Waterfront Park on June 2nd; Kick-Off to Summer June 19th at the waterfront; Smash Brothers Tournament being held at the Senior Center; summer movies starting; annual snapper contest details coming; Next meeting Monday, June 1st.
- Senior Center – celebrating Kindness Week at the center; special education for the members; next Sunday hosting barbecue; membership for Keyport residents is free; monthly newsletter available on our website.
- Fire/First Aid/OEM - read statement from Fire Chief Brendan Parker; fire boat being serviced by our mechanic; thanked Harbor Commission for their support throughout the process; thanked Fire Bureau, Anthony Vecchio and Nick Vecchio.
- Reminder - Rain date for food truck festival is Sunday; may come back in September if rained out.

Councilmember Bergen: Planning Board, Police, Recycling, Finance/Grants

Absent

Councilmember Kyne: KBBC, Redevelopment, Construction Office/Zoning, NPP, Public Works/Water-Sewer

- KBBC – Taste of Keyport event Saturday was great; shout out to Judi Scibetti who aided woman suffering from heat exhaustion; discussing dumpster situation for businesses in the back of Front Street;
- Redevelopment – 25 E. Front mowed weeds; Cass Street haven't discussed development but working on more enforcement regarding truck traffic; Aeromarine was discussed and Post Office legal correspondence is going back and forth regarding the lease; Steve O'Dwyer acting head of DPW and doing fabulous job; reported on water main breaks handled by department.

Council President McNamara: Finance/Grants, Green Team, Cannabis, Recreation/Senior Center, NPP

- Acknowledge two new sergeants; Councilman Bergen unable to be here offered his congratulations.
- Finance and Grants – state has still not assigned a reviewer for our budget; public hearing on budget next meeting June 16th; resolutions on this agenda relative to the audit; Corrective Action Plan – approximately \$110K combined unanticipated revenue to go to surplus.
- Excel Environmental has done work on HDSRF – application for Aeromarine; engineers submitted for living shoreline grant;
- Green Team – Sustainable Jersey event at Bell Works; skip the stuff takes effect August 1st; presentation introduction to beekeeping tomorrow at Brough Hall;
- Cannabis – Blaze awaiting JCP&L to get power to them, then most interior work to be completed; quarterly tax payment and annual license fee received from Premo.
- Other – local historian Tom Gallo will set up display second meeting each month; story walk display at Henry Hudson Trail at Main Street Park; sampling of coloring book pages; acknowledging the 250th flag here in council chambers and a second flag making the rounds at locations around the Borough; commented on volunteer ordinance recently adopted; background checks not required for one-day volunteers; ordinance is pretty clear regarding who needs a background check. Keyport Garden Walk is a one-day event with longer hours this year, including garden talks.

Councilmember Merla: Public Works/Water-Sewer, Health/Registrar/Fire Bureau/Property Maintenance, Redevelopment, Police, Harbor Commission

- Public Works - recycling center open Saturdays 9-12; leaf pick up; street sweeping; commented on multiple water main breaks around the Borough; garbage pickup; mark outs; grass cuttings; events prep; DPW asking for 4 summer help laborers; Administrator will have ad posted for hires tomorrow; no mulching or cleanup of flower beds at Cedar Street Park; water turned on; boat ramp lights; violation at Fischer's; trailer behind Apollo taken down; handicapped parking Therese Street Park; congratulations to new sergeants.

Mayor congratulated Al Litwak, Councilmember Pecora, and Councilmember Merla for efforts getting abandoned boat removed.

Councilmember Pecora: Harbor Commission, Municipal Alliance, Fire/First Aid/OEM, Cannabis

- Harbor Commission - commented regarding ordinances listed on agenda; dredging harbor; snapper contest; concerns about harbor discussed such as NESE pipeline; trees floating in bay possible hazard to boaters; council should consider adding spot for member of Keyport Yacht Club who may not be a resident; tilted piling at the boat ramp.
- Municipal Alliance – several successful events, Red Raider event; next Senior Prom for seniors taking place at the high school gym; mental health first aid event suicide prevention; event for kids “Get High on Life Not Drugs” coming in August at the waterfront; National Overdose Awareness Day August 31; next meeting is June 15th.

- First Aid - oldest volunteer company in the state; 426 first aid calls to date.

Councilmember Brady provided clarification for the Municipal Alliance event.

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

Mayor Araneo commented regarding the upcoming Juneteenth event to be held at the waterfront on June 20th.

Mayor Araneo asked if any Councilmembers had questions on the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Merla asked to pull Resolution No. 2026-176 from Consent Agenda for separate consideration and Councilmember Brady asked to remove Resolution No. 2026-172.

Motion to remove Resolution No. 2026-172.

MM: Brady 2ND: McNamara

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

Motion to pull Resolution No. 2026-176 for separate consideration

MM: Kyne 2ND: Brady

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Opened: 7:52pm MM: Merla 2ND: Brady

Jeffrey Spangler, Second Street – asked if Resolution No. 2026-166 has been put out, it's not on website; commented regarding Resolution No. 2026-174 for the water main break at Hobart Street and the invoice; he asked about Resolution No. 2026-175 and the Borough Administrator explained these are emergency resolutions below the bid threshold but above quote threshold; he further commented regarding background checks.

John Merla, Broad Street – commented Resolutions 2026-170 and 171 not referencing background checks; asked questions about Resolution No. 2026-176; urged Councilmember Brady to read the last page of the 2010 Excel report.

Jennifer Henning, Main Street - commented regarding Excel issues in 2010. Tired of innuendo taking place around Aeromarine.

Council President McNamara – clarified that the resolution on tonight is just for Excel to apply for the grant which they are doing at their cost.

Sandy Marion, Perry Street- commented on Resolution No. 2026-176 and recommends RFP process.

Michael Lane, First Street – commented regarding Resolution No. 2026-176 saying funding for Excel in the past came from the state; we should not spend taxpayer money;

Hillary Herzig Monmouth County – commented regarding the \$7,500 approved for Excel to review their own report and make another report; commented on town hall held on Sunday and on Excel being hired for a study.

Councilmember Pecora – spoke to Hillary Herzig's comments.

Elmer J. Graham Jr., St. Peters Place – commented regarding Resolution No. 2026-176 and urged council hold Bay Ridge accountable.

Kathleen de los Reyes – said people are distorting the Aeromarine issue and making it political. We need unity and to work together.

Closed: 9:24 p.m. MM: Merla 2ND: Brady

CONSENT AGENDA

- R2026-162 Payment of Bills Listed on the May 19, 2026 Bills List
- R2026-163 Approve Corrective Action Plan for the 2026 Municipal Audit
- R2026-164 Governing Body Certification of the Annual Audit
- R2026-165 Cancelling Taxes on Property Owned by Totally Disabled Veteran
- R2026-166 Amending the Compensation Rate for the Temporary Acting Superintendent of the Department of Public Works
- R2026-167 Approving Participation in the SFY26 LE Wellness Grant Administered by the State Of New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety
- R2026-168 Appointing Two Special Law Enforcement Officers - Class II
- R2026-169 Appointing Administrative Secretary to Chief of Police
- R2026-170 Appointment of Harbor Commission Member – *Michael Lane*
- R2026-171 Appointment of Harbor Commission Member – *Victoria Pacheco*
- R2026-172 Appointment of KBBC Member – *Maureen Marcil*
- R2026-173 Awarding and Confirming Emergency Contract Under New Jersey Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 Resulting from an Emergent Condition and Awarded to Apollo Sewer and Plumbing
- R2026-174 Awarding and Confirming Emergency Contract Under New Jersey Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 Resulting from an Emergent Condition and Awarded to Shore Site Development
- R2026-175 Awarding and Confirming Emergency Contract Under New Jersey Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6 Resulting from an Emergent Condition and Awarded to Shore Site Development, Signs and Safety Devices, LLC, and Jobs4Blue
- R2026-176 Authorizing Excel Environmental Resources, Inc. to Apply for Grant Funding to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for Site Investigation and/or Remedial Investigation of the Former Aeromarine Property

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Motion to approve resolutions R2026-162 through R2026-171 and R2026-173 through R2026-175 on the Consent Agenda, (approving **R2026-170** and **R2026-171** as amended to include whereas clause that the background checks were completed)

MM: Merla 2nd: Brady

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora

Nays:

Abstain:

Absent: Bergen

Motion to approve R2026-176

MM: Kyne 2nd: Brady

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora

Nays:

Absent: Bergen

Abstain:

PUBLIC HEARINGS/ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES

1. Ordinance No. 2026-10 – Creating Harbor Master and Assistant Harbor Master Positions

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 11 ENTITLED “RECREATION FACILITIES” SECTION 11-4 “BOATS” BY CREATING NEW SECTION 11-4.9 “HARBOR MASTER AND ASSISTANT HARBOR MASTER” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT**

1a. Motion to Open Public Hearing 8:27 p.m. MM: Pecora 2nd: Brady

Elmer J. Graham Jr. – asked for explanation of the ordinance which Councilmember Pecora provided; this ordinance creates volunteer positions to oversee the activity in the harbor and be a contact person for folks coming into the harbor.

1b. Motion to Close Public Hearing at 8:27 p.m. MM: Merla 2nd: McNamara

1c. Motion to adopt Ordinance MM: Brady 2nd: Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora,
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

1d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted moved and carried.

2. Ordinance No. 2026-11– Establishing Rules and Oversight for Anchoring in Keyport Harbor

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 11 ENTITLED “RECREATION FACILITIES”, SECTION 11-4 “BOATS”, BY CREATING NEW SECTION 11-4.10 “TRANSIENT OVERNIGHT ANCHORING” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT**

2a. Motion to Open Public Hearing 8:28pm MM: Pecora 2nd: Brady

2b. Seeing no one, Motion to Close Public Hearing 8:28 p.m. MM: Merla 2nd: Brady

2c. Motion to adopt Ordinance MM: Brady 2nd: Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

2d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted moved and carried.

3. Ordinance No. 2026-12 – Establishing Dock Time Limit

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 11 ENTITLED “RECREATION FACILITIES” SECTION 11-5 “KEYPORT FISHING PIER” BY CREATING NEW SECTION 11-5.3 “DOCK TIME LIMIT” OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT**

3a. Motion to Open Public Hearing 8:29 p.m. MM: Brady 2nd: Merla

Elmer J. Graham, Jr., St. Peters Place - asked why do we need a time limit. Councilmember Pecora explained it's a request of the police department because people were tying up for long periods.

Mayor Araneo commended the Harbor Commission for their work on the ordinance.

3b. Motion to Close Public Hearing 8:30pm MM: Kyne 2nd: Brady

3c. Motion to adopt Ordinance MM: Pecora 2nd: Merla

Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen

3d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted moved and carried.

4. Ordinance No. 2026-13 – Amending Bond Ordinance 2023-12 Fireman's Park

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **BOND ORDINANCE AMENDING BOND ORDINANCE NO. 2023-12 FINALLY ADOPTED ON OCTOBER 3, 2023 IN ORDER TO REVISE THE DESCRIPTION AND COST OF the Fireman's Park Boardwalk and Parking Lot Project BY THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT BY THE BOROUGH OF KEYPORT**

4a. Motion to Open Public Hearing 8:32pm MM: Brady 2nd: Merla

John Merla, Broad Street – asked the engineer about the ordinance and Green Acres funding. Borough Engineer said the grant total is now up to over \$3 million. Mr. Merla thinks Councilmember Merla should abstain from voting on the ordinance

Michael Lane – commented the Keyport Fishery across the street owns a portion of the lot and got approval to build. He asked has that area been part of the Fireman's Park definition? The engineer said no, its private property. Mr. Lane said this is an issue because he has not put in the required protection along the creek for flooding. Are we still going to have flooding? Mr. Zwingraf provided an explanation of the project. Mr. Lane said he hasn't built a retaining wall on their property as required. He asked are we doing anything to protect the homes up the creek? Will this solve the problem with Ring Road flooding? Mr. Zwingraf said we're going to raise a portion of the road about 3 feet to make it consistent with the rest of the road.

4b. Motion to Close Public Hearing 8:40 p.m. MM: Brady 2nd: McNamara

- 4c. Motion to adopt Ordinance MM: Kyne 2nd: Brady
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain: Merla
Absent: Bergen
- 4d. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as adopted moved and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE

1. Ordinance- Truck Restrictions on Certain Streets

The Clerk read the Ordinance by Title: **ORDINANCE ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 7 (TRAFFIC), SCHEDULE VIII (TRUCKS OVER FOUR TONS AND VEHICLES OVER THE REGISTERED GROSS WEIGHT EXCLUDED)**

- 1a. Motion to introduce MM: McNamara 2nd: Kyne
Roll Call: Ayes: Brady, Kyne, McNamara, Merla, Pecora
Nays:
Abstain:
Absent: Bergen
- 1b. Motion authorizing the Clerk to publish the Ordinance as introduced for a public hearing moved and carried.

REPORTS

1. Municipal Clerk's Report for April 2026
 2. Tax/Water/Sewer Collector's Report for April 2026
 3. Board of Health Treasurer's Report for April 2026
 4. Building Department Report for April 2026
 5. Municipal Court Report for April 2026
- MM: Merla 2nd: Brady

OLD BUSINESS

- * Articulated Truck Traffic on Perry Street (Councilmember Bergen)
- * Notification of Tax Abatement Ordinance (Councilmember Merla)
- * Handicapped Parking Space at Therese Street Park (Councilmember Merla)
- * Storm Drain Issue Reporting to Borough (Councilmember Pecora)
- * Sewer Upgrades/Bond Ordinance (Councilmember Bergen)
- * Green Grove Area Flooding (Councilmember Merla)
- * Recycling Center (Council President McNamara)
- * MOU with BDA (Councilmember Bergen)
- * Abandoned Boat (Councilmember Pecora)
- * Cultural Festival (Brady)
- * Kearney Street (Pecora)

Councilmember Merla will talk with Council President McNamara about notifying residents of tax abatement ordinance. Councilmember Merla is working the Borough Administrator and Chief Fern on Therese Street handicapped parking; Borough Engineer commented regarding Green Grove area flooding.

Councilmember Pecora commented regarding storm drain issues – we are in a drought; put out notice to residents to let us know of issues but we've not had enough rain yet. She said the abandoned boat is almost gone thanks to hard work by attorneys, administrator, and Al Litwak from Harbor Commission; the boat owner has assumed responsibility so no cost to tax payers. Put out notice for input from residents regarding how to best handle issue of wrong-way drivers; received several responses and putting together a report; will work with police to make the road safer; new issues brought to light by residents.

Council President McNamara commented regarding getting the recycling center open Tuesday or Wednesday night from 4-7, waiting on staffing.

Councilmember Brady – Regarding Sons and Daughters of Italy Festival request, she reached out to the organization regarding paperwork needing to be submitted, what sort of coverage is needed, and associated costs.

NEW BUSINESS

- *2022 Parking Report (McNamara)
- *Resident Parking Permit Division & Osborn (Chief)

- *Short Term Rentals (McNamara)
- *Street Closure Fees (Brady)
- *Presentation from H.E.A.R.T. (Pecora)

Council President McNamara - commented regarding ordinance for parking downtown and parking time limits. She has solicited the help of few other councilmembers. Working with Councilmember Kyne.

Resident parking Division and Osborn – permit parking is a possibility; also potential to create small parking lot on corner of Division and Hurley over existing grassy area.

Council President McNamara said people have expred interest wanting to use their property for Air BNB etc.; we don't have an ordinance so looking to explore how to regulate; Borough Attorney Carol Berlen has done these types of ordinances before.

Councilmember Brady commented regarding street closure fees; she pulled some info and sent to administrator and attorney to update our ordinances and make them clearer.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Meeting was opened to the public for comments.
Opened: 8:57 p.m. MM: Merla 2nd: Brady

Michelle Knox, Pine Street – thanked councilmembers for taking time to discuss the short-term rental matter; commented on positives aspects of Air BNB and other short-term rentals.

Chris Schreck, Fulton Street – thanked governing body for the Sunday town hall and for the 4-way stop at Second and Fulton.

Councilmember Merla asked about “deaf child” sign.

Judi Scibetti, Jackson Street and 24-7 EMS volunteer – lot of young people in town are EMTs. Happy EMS week.

Jeffrey Spangler, Second Street – thanked everyone for everything done on Second Street; asked what happened to the bricks with the names on Second Street; commented on curb cut at 172 Second Street; asked about cost to the borough for the abandoned boat removal and said you should consider costs of attorneys, etc.

Jason Faltings, W. Front Street – congratulated the new sergeants; commented regarding trucks over 4-ton ordinance and said may want to stick with gross vehicle weight rating; commented on the volunteer ordinance, asked who needs a background check and who doesn't; discussion ensued regarding Borough employee background checks; administrator said the ordinance is fairly new and we need to iron out some issues – we're working with legal for amendments. Councilmember Pecora commented regarding the ordinance.

Hillary Herzig Monmouth County resident – congratulated the newly-sworn-in sergeants; she addressed Councilmember Pecora stating she misrepresented her intentions. Councilmember Pecora responded.

Jessica Callandrillo, Fulton St – worked and retired from the Post Office and is concerned about the lease; she said Green Grove floods because there is no drainage; commented regarding resident parking issues.

John Merla, Broad Street – commented regarding Councilmember Pecora's comment that background checks are required by state law, saying that's not true; he asked if a punch-list was put together for Second Street; he commented on a sign pointing across the street and asked about red, white, and blue striping being done on American Legion Drive, possibly through donations.

Elmer J. Graham Jr., St. Peters Place – asked about status of Italian American festival; let's have a vote on it; Councilmember Brady said we need the paperwork to vote on it; he pitched We Care Adult Care and said they are looking for qualified bus drivers; pitched American Legion Raritan Post 23.

Mike Lane, First Street – commented Green Team stepping up to NESE pipeline; Council passed resolution opposing but we need to do more; Urged council to send note to governor opposing the pipeline; this will be much worse than Aeromarine. He Mentioned old business – meeting at high school was great; he’s impressed with the painted crosswalks at the corners for children near the schools; First Street needs crosswalks; children cross the street to get to the water and the yacht club.

Ed Carew, Broadway – said he was amazed to see so many politicians, officials, etc., at the high school Town Hall meeting on Sunday; he commented on pollution in the water from upstream facilities; he thanked First Aid for assisting his wife with medical issue.

Closed: 9:38 p.m. MM: McNamara 2nd: Brady

EXECUTIVE SESSION

R2026-177- Authorizing a meeting not open to the Public in accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, for the purpose of discussing attorney-client privileged matters concerning a lease agreement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(5) and a personnel matter pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12b(8)

Motion made and carried to go into Closed Session at 9:39 p.m.

Motion made and carried to reconvene to Open Session at 10:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned: 10:11 p.m. MM: Pecora 2nd: McNamara