

**STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY APRIL 9, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Hall called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Hall led the Pledge and said an opening prayer.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT:** The Borough Clerk read the following statement:

“This meeting has been duly noticed in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.”

**ROLL CALL:**

MAYOR LINDA HALL	JEFFREY BRENNAN, BOROUGH SOLICITOR
COUNCILMAN PATRICK GILLIGAN	CRAIG REILLY, BOROUGH ENGINEER
COUNCILMAN BOB BOVE	RON MORELLO, POLICE CHIEF/OEM COORDINATOR
COUNCILWOMAN JESSICA FARRELL	BOB BOVE, JR ACTING FIRE CHIEF
COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY	MICHELLE HACK, RMC BOROUGH CLERK/ADMIN
COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN	
COUNCILMAN MIKE TOLOMEO	

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** March 12, 2026 Regular Meeting

**MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:**

**Motion:** Councilman Gandy  
**Second:** Councilman Bove  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

**PUBLIC PORTION FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:**

**MOTION TO OPEN THE FLOOR:**

**Motion:** Councilman Gilligan  
**Second:** Councilman Tolomeo  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

John Gentless

Suggested that the council pass a resolution in support of the SAO for the County Park Grant.

**MOTION TO CLOSE THE FLOOR:**

**Motion:** Councilman Bove  
**Second:** Councilwoman Martin  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

**POLICE REPORT:** Police Chief Morello provided the following report of the Stratford Borough Police Department Activities for March 2026:

- 3/2 During the afternoon hours, we were called to a home on Washington Blvd to investigate a report of a telephone scam, that resulted in a \$30,00.00 loss to the resident. Similar to a case reported two months ago, the resident fell for a scam where she withdrew large sums of money and gave the cash to a mule (Uber)

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- 3/6 During the evening hours, a patient at Jefferson had her vehicle stolen from the handicapped parking space in the ER lot. In this case the keys were left in the car, it was recovered the next day in Washington Twp.
- 3/7 On a Saturday morning, a one vehicle accident, car into the “Money Pole” in front of 5 West Laurel. This was a 19-hour road closure, ACE, Verizon, Cable, Gas and even the water line was disrupted.
- 3/7 During the morning, we responded to a home on Cornell Avenue for a report of a 43-year-old man overdosing on heroin. The man was revived using Narcan and refused medical treatment. Later that afternoon, the same home on the 100 block of Cornell, we were called back because the wife was overdosing. 4 Doses of Narcan and CPR, the female was transported to Jefferson. Just prior to clearing the scene, the husband went down overdosing. He was again brought back and both were taken to Jefferson.
- 3/9 During the afternoon hours, we responded to the Pharmacy area of CVS for a 65-year-old man down. Officers arrived and onlookers also recognized the situation as an overdose. Triple shots of Narcan were administered, the man was transported to Jefferson Hospital.
- A short time later, the bathroom of the Burger King, yet another overdose with Narcan deployed. He was also revived and refused treatment.
- 3/17 We were hit extremely hard by the windstorm that left the town in bad shape with trees, wires, debris everywhere. It was a real challenge to get hazards identified, coned, taped for school opening. Our officers and the fire department did a very good job on handling the situation. That evening, we had 27 storm related calls.
- 3/19 Overnight, we were called to crime in progress on Sunnybrook Rd. At least two men were observed pulling on car handles. Young Officer Romano who was responding to the call found a stolen vehicle fleeing the scene. The vehicle pursuit was terminated on RT 295 in Barrington. One victim had his wallet stolen from a brand-new pick-up truck. A 15-year-old from Camden was arrested the next morning after again running from police and smashing the stolen car in Barrington.
- 3/20 During the morning hours we responded to a home in Laurel Mills for a Sextortion case. In this matter a teenager sent photographs of himself to what he thought was a female he met online. Thereafter, demands for money were underway.
- 3/26 During the morning hours, our crossing guard at Parkview was breaking down her crossing post when a parent leaving the school lot struck her in the street. Fortunately, the crossing guard was shaken up but not injured,
- The Parish Family Fun Festival application is approved for May 21,22,23rd. The hours have been reduced to 6:00pm – 9:00pm. 5 officers per night on the detail, and the church is adding private security.
- The DARE Graduation this year is at 9:30am on May 21st, Yellin School. All are invited to attend.

**OEM REPORT:** March 2026

During the month of March 2026, the Emergency Management Coordinator attended one County Meeting and finalized a new three-year shared services agreement with Magnolia Ambulance Association. The new agreement is being paid privately by the Stratford Ambulance Association to Magnolia Ambulance Association. Along with Stratford, Somerdale, Hi-Nella, Lawnside and Laurel Springs all continue to utilize Magnolia as their EMS provider.

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**FIRE REPORT:**

The Stratford Fire Department for the month of March. The following is a breakdown of the same:

	<u>Month</u>	<u>YTD</u>
BUILDINGS	3	13
ALARM SYSTEMS	10	27
DWELLINGS	4	4
INVESTIGATIONS	8	19
MOTORVEHICLE ACCIDENTS/RESCUE	7	19
WIRES, TREES DOWN	10	13
BRUSH	0	0
VEHICLE	1	1
ASSIST EMS/POLICE/PUBLIC	3	17
DRILLS	3	8
SARS	1	1
	<u>Alarms:</u>	<u>Drills:</u>
Monthly:	49	3
Year to Date:	114	8

**ENGINEER REPORT:**

Mr. Bach provided a written report that was submitted to Council and is on file in the Clerk's Office.

**ORDINANCE & PROPERTY REPORT:**

Councilman Bove presented the Code Inspection Report for March 2026.

Total number of properties inspected:	70
Total number of notices:	40
Total number of summonses:	0
Total number of emails:	75
Total number of phone calls:	50

**BOROUGH FINANCIAL REPORT**

Councilman Tolomeo provided the Annual Tax Collector's Report and the March 2026 Finance Reports.

Balance as of 2-28-2026:	\$ 2,251,757.50
Total Receipts:	\$ 348,519.14
Total Disbursements:	\$ 2,155,633.91
Balance as of 3-31-2026	\$ 444,642.73
Capital, Sewer and Trust Funds:	\$ 2,862,874.32

**EMERGENCY SERVICES:**

Councilwoman Farrell presented the report for Stratford Ambulance for the month of March 2026. There were 99 calls for ambulance service, with a total for the year of 241.

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**POLICE** - Councilman Gilligan presented the reports for March 2026 are as follows:

Adult arrests	28	Juvenile arrests	0
Assaults to Police	0	Simple assaults Complaints	5
Criminal Mischief Complaints	7	Harassment complaints	7
Other investigations and complaints	627	Burglary	0
Robberies	0	Thefts (9) in the amount of \$	36,750
Stolen property recovered \$	7,225	Motor vehicle thefts	1
D.W.I. arrests	6	Narcotics arrests	6
Traffic summonses issued	378	Motor vehicle accidents	20
injuries from accidents	6	Alarm Activations	33
Total Crime Reports Taken	88	Total Calls for Police Service	698

**PUBLIC WORKS AND LIGHTING:** Councilman Gandy presented the DPW /Sewer Reports for March 2026:

**DPW**

1. DPW repaired 26 potholes throughout the town using EZ Street Cold Patch.
2. Brush Pickup is done Bi-Weekly in March.
3. Metal and Electronic Pickups are done every Wednesday of the month.
4. DPW ordered their chipper cap which is expected to be delivered in late-May.

**Trash and Recycling Tonnage/Tipping Fees**

- Solid Waste Tonnage – 303.79 Ton resulting in \$29,932.43 in tipping fees at Reworld.
- Single Stream Recycling – Recycling records were not available at the time of typing this report

**Vehicle Maintenance**

1. One Sanitation Vehicle needed an emergency tow, due to the truck having a secondary air chamber leak. The truck was towed, repaired, and back on the road in one day thanks to JPF Auto.
2. 3 DPW Vehicles were serviced at JPF Auto in March.
3. DPW Lawn Equipment is due for service prior to Grass Cutting and Opening Day in April.

**Facility maintenance**

1. Cleaning DPW Facility on a weekly basis.
2. Playground inspections done weekly.
3. The DPW cleared leaves from the Stratford Library roof due to leaves building up by the drain spouts.
4. ALL Fire Extinguishers in Public Buildings were also inspected in March.
5. DPW conducted Building Inspections in March at ALL public buildings.

**Seasonal Services**

1. During March there were a few rain storms that resulted in fallen trees, limbs, and power outages. DPW assisted in down trees on Warwick Road after one of the rain storms.

**Sewer Call outs**

1. There were 22 sewer call outs total in the month of March, all 22 of them being resident related issues. We had to perform Jetter operations for 1 of the residents' house calls, due to our Sewer Main being impassable at those times. All blockages were cleared after performing Jetting Operations.

**PUBLIC EVENTS:**

The Annual Egg Hunt was well attended and considered a great success. Council, Mayor Hall, Chief Lemmerman, and Chief Morello, along with Mr. Gentless were thanked for their continued support in ensuring a safe and enjoyable event for residents. On March 24, Town Historian Carole Dadino presented a program highlighting

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Stratford's past 100 years. Attendance was good, and resident feedback was highly positive therefore an additional program is being planned. The Miss and Little Miss Stratford Pageants will take place on Friday, April 24 at 6:30 PM at Yellin School. Residents are encouraged to attend and support the participants.

**ORDINANCES**

**ORDINANCE #04-2026    ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS  
*First Reading*                    AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)**

**MOTION TO INTRODUCE ORDINANCE #:04-2026**

**Motion:**            Councilman Tolomeo  
**Second:**         Councilwoman Martin  
**In Favor:**        All  
**Opposed:**         None

**RESOLUTIONS #57-2026 - #65-2026 CONSENT AGENDA**

Resolutions shall be read by title only. At this time, the Council may request to remove any of the resolutions from the consent agenda to be voted upon separately.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS READ BY TITLE ONLY**

**Motion:**            Councilwoman Martin  
**Second:**         Councilwoman Farrell  
**In Favor:**        All  
**Opposed:**         None

- 057-2026        AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2026 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – ADA RAMP IMPROVEMENTS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS
  
- 058-2026        AUTHORIZING CANCELLATION OF PROPERTY TAXES DUE TO TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN TAX EXEMPT STATUS
  
- 059-2026        AUTHORIZING THE APPROVAL OF A SPECIAL EVENT LICENSE FOR JOHN PAUL II FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL CARNIVAL DURING THE DATES OF MAY 21, 2026 THROUGH MAY 23, 2026
  
- 060-2026        AUTHORIZE APPLICATION FOR 2026-2027 STATE NJ DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY & TRAFFIC SAFETY DWI TASK FORCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$52,100.00
  
- 061-2026        AUTHORIZING THE 2026-2027 GRANT APPLICATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY & TRAFFIC SAFETY PEDESTRIAN STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,300.00
  
- 062-2026        AUTHORIZING THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF PATRICK DYMOND AS THE CERTIFIED TAX ASSESSOR
  
- 063-2026        TO AUTHORIZE STRATFORD FIRE COMPANY 2026 COIN DROP FUNDRAISER DATES & LOCATIONS
  
- 064-2026        ADOPTING AN AMENDED SPENDING PLAN FOR THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND

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65-2026 AUTHORIZING THE SETTLEMENT OF CERTAIN LITIGATION WITH THE FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER, INC.

**MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS #57-2026 through #65-2026**

**Motion:** Councilman Gilligan  
**Second:** Councilman Tolomeo  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

**MERCANTILE LICENSE APPROVALS:**

- CASE# 2026-02449 Dollar Tree #10983  
100 Warwick Road, Stratford NJ 08084

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE MERCANTILE LICENSES:**

**Motion:** Councilwoman Martin  
**Second:** Councilman Bove  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT OF THE BILLS THAT ARE IN ORDER:**

**Motion:** Councilman Gandy  
**Second:** Councilwoman Farrell  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

MAYOR LINDA HALL – commented that she was pleased with the progress Stratford is making in welcoming new businesses and settling lawsuits. She mentioned the grand opening of the storage facility, thanked everyone for the Easter Bunny egg event, commended the Fire Department on their Installation dinner, and noted that the borough is adding 21 new hero banners.

COUNCILMAN GILLIGAN – congratulated all the fire department members who were acknowledged at the Installation dinner. He also thanked everyone who participated in the Easter celebration and asked that everyone keep the Morello family in their thoughts and prayers.

COUNCILMAN BOB BOVE –reminded residents to bag their grass clippings and yard waste separately from regular trash, noting that yard waste pickup begins this month.

COUCILWOMAN JESSICA FARRELL – thanked the residents of Stratford for their patience through the winter storms, and she also encouraged everyone to attend meetings and participate.

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COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY – expressed his gratitude to the fire department, highlighting several long-serving members for their admirable dedication, and noted that the Easter celebration was a fun and well-attended event.

COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN – expressed her gratitude to all tonight’s meeting participants; and to those who helped make the Easter Egg hunt celebration a success. She noted she was pleased with the turnout for the historical presentation and mentioned she's looking for a leader for the Historical Committee. She also gave a special thanks to Chief Lemmerman, the fire department, and the Stratford Police Department for always being available. Last, she reminded residents that the Miss Stratford competition is being held April 24 at Yellin School and encouraged all to attend.

COUNCILMAN TOLOMEO – thanked all the Easter celebration volunteers and the police department. He also reminded residents to keep their car doors locked due to an uptick in thefts.

**GOOD AND WELFARE:**

**MOTION TO OPEN THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC FOR GOOD AND WELFARE:**

**Motion:** Councilwoman Martin  
**Second:** Councilman Bove  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

John Gentless Discussed the previous historical committee and shared suggestions for forming a new one. He also raised concerns about the removal of trees on private property, suggesting that the borough did not follow the ordinance and that restitution should be considered

Chris Quail Stated he is an LTE, (licensed tree expert) recognized by the state of New Jersey, discussed the benefits of having a community forestry management plan. He also talked about the impact of tree removals on private property along Berlin Road and offered to help the borough introduce a permit process and enforcement to the current tree ordinance.

Regina Campi Stated concerns about a leaky manhole/sewer on Warwick Road at Wilsons Pub.

Chief Lemmerman Presented Mayor Hall with a jacket and shirt from the Stratford Fire Department.

**MOTION TO CLOSE THE GOOD AND WELFARE PORTION:**

**Motion:** Councilman Tolomeo  
**Second:** Councilwoman Martin  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**Motion:** Councilman Gilligan  
**Second:** Councilman Bove  
**In Favor:** All  
**Opposed:** None

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Minutes respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michelle Hack", written in black ink.

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Michelle Hack, RMC  
Borough Clerk and Administrator