

**STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY JANUARY 8, 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:
In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act public notice of this meeting has been provided to The Retrospect, the Courier Post, and posted to the Official Borough Website and posted on the Official Bulletin Board in the Borough Hall.

ROLL CALL:

MAYOR LINDA HALL	PRESENT
COUNCIL PRESIDENT PATRICK GILLIGAN	PRESENT
COUNCILMAN BOB BOVE	PRESENT
COUNCILWOMAN JESSICA FARRELL	PRESENT
COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY	PRESENT
COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN	PRESENT
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL TOLOMEO	PRESENT
JEFFREY BRENNAN, BOROUGH SOLICITOR	PRESENT
CRAIG REILLY, BOROUGH ENGINEER	PRESENT
LEAH FUREY BRODER, AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSULTANT	PRESENT
RON MORELLO, POLICE CHIEF/OEM COORDINATOR	PRESENT
MICHAEL LEMMERMAN, FIRE CHIEF	PRESENT
MICHELLE HACK, BOROUGH CLERK/ADMINISTRATOR	PRESENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 11, 2026 and December 30, 2026 - REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
A motion was made by Councilman Bove, seconded by Councilwoman Farrell. Motion carried with all members voting in the affirmative during a roll call vote. Councilwoman Martin abstained from voting on the minutes from December 30, 2025.

PUBLIC PORTION FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

Councilman Gandy motioned to open the public portion on agenda items only. Councilman Bove seconded the motion, which carried with all members present voting in favor in favor, none opposed.

1. John Gentless from Union Avenue asked for clarification on certain resolutions named on the agenda and the reasons for the Executive Session.

Councilman Gilligan motioned to close the public portion for agenda items. Councilman Bove seconded the motion, which carried with all members voting in favor, none opposed.

POLICE REPORT: Police Chief Morello provided the following report of the Stratford Borough Police Department Activities for December 2025:

12/1 During the evening hours, officers on patrol came upon a running vehicle along Sidney Lane. They soon discovered the vehicle was reported stolen two days prior from the Sicklerville section of Gloucester Twp. A vehicle stolen from Stratford a few days prior was located in the same complex this vehicle was stolen from.

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12/2 Two vehicles stolen from Garden State Pavement, (Hunt Ave) both with keys were recovered. A Dump Truck was recovered in Berlin Twp off of route 73 and the second a Smart Car was found dumped in Atlantic City near the Tropicana Casino.

12/9 2 Nurses and 1 security guard were assaulted by a 35-year-old intoxicated Glassboro man while rendering treatment to the male in the emergency room. He was charged with aggravated assault and related crimes.

12/14 During the evening hours, we were called to the Dollar General for a report of another auto theft. Initially the victim reported her vehicle and dog were stolen from the parking lot as she shopped. The vehicle and dog were located on Chestnut Ave in Laurel Springs about an hour later. The next day, we were able to review the video and discovered the vehicle was not actually stolen, but driven away by the reporting persons boyfriend who was in the car the entire time.

12/18 Overnight, several unlocked vehicles were burglarized on Temple Avenue and in the Estates. Somerdale, Magnolia and Barrington also had car burglaries. Barrington PD chases two stolen autos from a scene and lost one in Camden, the other crossed the Bridge into Philadelphia.

12/19 The next night, around 4:00am, we received a call of a prowler on Pennsylvania Ave in Woods and Leaves. That suspect was located and arrested hiding in a rear yard on Swarthmore. 23-year-old Trenton Man was jailed on numerous counts of burglary and theft. His 16-year-old lady friend was locating waiting in his vehicle on west Harvard; she was ultimately released to her aunt who responded from Trenton.

12/22 During the evening hours, our officers responded to assist Lindenwold Police in pursuit of a kidnapping suspect who car jacked a vehicle from an apartment complex on Gibbsboro Road. The vehicle had a baby in the rear seat when the vehicle was stolen. The driver was pursued and dumped the car on Berlin Road just in to Stratford near Carlton Avenue (PATCO) The baby was recovered safe and the suspect was located after about a 40-minute drag net in the woods along PATCO. A 17-year-old from Sicklerville was arrested on carjacking and weapons crimes and turned over to Lindenwold PD.

12/27 During the afternoon hours, we learned of an assault that occurred on in Stratford on Christmas that resulted in the death of 73-year-old Buena Man. In this case, the incident occurred at a home on Wright Avenue and sometime later, the victim was taken by ambulance from his Buena home to Inspira ER and later transported to Cooper Trauma where he passed. A family member, a 69-year-old man from Port St Lucie was charged with 2nd manslaughter and was arrested by the US Marshal's service and the Philadelphia Airport.

12/28 During the afternoon, officers and FD responded to Jefferson Hospital for a fire on the 3rd floor in a patient's room. 66-bedded patients were in the facility; fortunately, a mass evacuation was not required.

Other notes:

- During the month of December, at the request of the school district we investigated one case of a residency fraud involving an illegally registered student who was confirmed to be living out of town and being transported daily to Stratford for catch a Stratford school bus. The criminal case remains pending regarding the Stratford resident who falsified registration documents. The fraudster who falsified the registration paperwork and the parent who also falsified records face criminal charges and or restitution, of approx. 25K.
- We completed the second full year of our Outside Employment FEE Ordinance, requiring vendors such as ACE, Verizon etc. pay vehicle and administrative fees to the borough for Officers on extra-duty. In 2025, Stratford received over \$21,000.00 in fees, just about the same amount we budgeted for our vehicle repairs for the entire police fleet. That ordinance is working our well, I I will look to adjust our fees when the feds update their permissible rates thru FEMA.

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OEM REPORT:

1. The Emergency Management Coordinator attended one Camden County meeting.
2. Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator Tim Hall volunteered to assist at the annual Christmas Tree lighting including circling back for trash removal the following day.
3. Laurel Manor, Rowan Medical, Rowan SOM, and Jefferson Hospital all opted into the annual EMS subscription service and paid their annual fees.

FIRE REPORT:

The Stratford Fire Department for the month of December 2025. The following is a breakdown of the same:

	<u>Month</u>	<u>YTD</u>
BUILDINGS	5	35
ALARM SYSTEMS	11	128
DWELLINGS	7	31
INVESTIGATIONS	15	129
MOTORVEHICLE ACCIDENTS/RESCUE	7	63
WIRES, TREES DOWN	10	44
BRUSH	0	8
VEHICLE	1	2
ASSIST EMS/POLICE/PUBLIC	1	30
DRILLS	3	27
	<u>Alarms:</u>	<u>Drills:</u>
Year to Date:	470	27

ENGINEER REPORT:

Mr. Bach stated the written report was submitted to Council and highlighted a few of the updates and is on file in the Clerk’s Office.

ORDINANCE & PROPERTY REPORT:

Councilman Bove presented the Code Inspection Report for December 2025:

- Total number of properties inspected: 42
- Total number of notices: 22
- Total number of summonses: 0
- Total number of emails: 23
- Total number of phone calls: 52

BOROUGH FINANCIAL REPORT

Councilman Tolomeo provided the December 2025 Finance Reports.

Balance as of 11-30-2025:	\$ 2,488,533.11
Total Receipts:	\$ 784,556.61
Total Disbursements:	\$ 2,084,204.35
Balance as of 12-31-2025	\$ 1,188,885.37
Capital, Sewer and Trust Funds:	\$ 2,822,576.05

EMERGENCY SERVICES:

Councilwoman Farrell presented the report for Stratford Ambulance: December 2025

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There were 85 calls for ambulance service, with a total for the year of 962.

POLICE - Councilman Gilligan presented the reports for December 2025 are as follows:

Adult arrests	25	Juvenile arrests	0
Assaults to Police	0	Simple assaults Complaints	6
Criminal Mischief Complaints	3	Harassment complaints	8
Other investigations and complaints	569	Burglary	0
Robberies	0	Thefts (12) in the amount of \$	77,200
Stolen property recovered \$	27,250	Motor vehicle thefts	3
D.W.I. arrests	5	Narcotics arrests	9
Traffic summonses issued	324	Motor vehicle accidents	19
injuries from accidents	4	Alarm Activations	22
Total Crime Reports Taken	82	Total Calls for Police Service	709

PUBLIC WORKS AND LIGHTING:

Councilman Gandy presented the DPW and the Sewer Reports for December 2025:

Stormwater compliance

1. Cleaned inlets 4 times in December

DPW

1. Pothole Repairs: 2
2. Hosted our Tree Lighting Event at Yellin School. 2 DPW employees were in attendance working.

Trash and Recycling Tonnage/Tipping Fees

Due to the Holidays, we were unable to obtain our dumping records from our vendors in time for this meeting.

Vehicle Maintenance

1. DPW Pickup truck had windshield replaced
2. We had ordered a new chipper cap for our dump truck, which will be our new chipper truck.
3. DPW obtained quotes and will be servicing all trucks and their issues in the upcoming weeks in January.
4. 2 New batteries for DPW Trucks have been purchased and installed.

Facility maintenance

1. Cleaning DPW Facility on a weekly basis.
2. Playground inspections done weekly.

Seasonal Services

1. DPW had started leaf collection in November and will be collecting leaves into January.
2. Leafing is getting completed on a weekly basis, any daily updates sent to Borough Hall.
3. DPW handled two snow storms in two weeks in December, resulting in 22 Ton of salt applied throughout the town and 1000 gallons of brine applied before the first storm.

Sewer Call outs

1. There were 10 call outs total in the month of November, 8 of them being residents and 2 of them for pump station related issues.

PUBLIC EVENTS:

Councilwoman Martin, reported for the December Public Events Committee. Seventy-five residents participated in the Holiday House Decorating Contest, and on December 23, Borough Officials delivered prizes to the winners. Operation Santa, organized by the Stratford Fire Department, for escorting Santa through town on Christmas Eve. The committee also thanked the Stratford Library employees and the Girl Scout and

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GOOD AND WELFARE:

Motion was made by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Gandy to open the meeting to the public for Good and Welfare. Motion carried with all members voting in favor.

1. Walt Baxter stated he spent 25 years on the HPC, explained the letter he sent in November and asked if Council had a desire to re-boot the HPC.
2. John Gentless spoke on the past and how certain things were handled, especially related to the HPC, and related to other volunteer groups that Borough should reconsider enacting, such as the Environmental Commission, the Green Team, and the Shade Tree Board. Asked for a redevelopment update and encouraged Council to work on an ordinance related to Shade Trees in conjunction with Atlantic City Electric.
3. TJ Krempa and Ross Misrok introduced themselves at SAO President and Vice President and informed Council they'd like Council to apply for a Local Recreation Grant; and updated on projects they are working on and ones that need improvement.
4. Stan Panzo inquired as to why a manger wasn't displayed with the holiday decorations, when it was realized the Borough doesn't own one he offered o make one for next season.

No one else came forth to speak therefore closing the Good and Welfare Session.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Martin, seconded by Councilman Bove to close the Good and Welfare portion. Motion carried with all members voting in favor.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

MAYOR LINDA HALL – welcomed all of Council back for an exciting year ahead. Thanked the residents and members of SAO and HPC for coming out and speaking at this meeting. Announced Officer of the Year for Stratford PD is Zach Collins. Thanked the residents for contributing to the Mayor's Sock drive, almost 400 pairs of socks were delivered to the Unforgotten Haven and Laurel Manor.

COUNCILMAN GILLIGAN – Happy New Year to all, and looking forward to working with this Council in 2026.

COUNCILMAN BOB BOVE – Wished everyone a happy and healthy New Year!

COUCILWOMAN JESSICA FARRELL – Thanked everyone for attending this meeting and asked for citizen volunteers for the Parks and Recreation Committee.

COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY – Thanked everyone for their attendance and made a note that the Borough Offices and DPW is closed on MLK Jr. Day, the Trash schedule has been altered to reflect.

COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN – Thanked Mr. Baxter and Ms. Dadino for their work on the HPC; asked everyone to acknowledge the Stratford PD in honor of National Law Enforcement Day.

COUNCILMAN TOLOMEO – Wished everyone a happy and healthy New Year!

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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Motion was made by Councilman Tolomeo, seconded by Councilman Bove to enter into Executive Session with all Council voting aye. Mr. Brennan stated this session could take approximately 40 minutes, and reserved the right to take action if needed.

Motion made by Councilman Gandy, seconded by Councilman Bove to exit Executive Session. Motion carried with all members voting in favor. No formal actions were taken as a result of or during the Executive Session.

ADJOURN:

Councilwoman Farrell motioned to adjourn the meeting and Councilman Tolomeo seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting in favor.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Michelle Hack, RMC
Borough Clerk and Administrator