

**STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 6, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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 Courier Post, The Retrospect and is posted on the Official Bulletin Board Borough Hall.

PRAYER: By: Father Rene Canales, Our Lady of Guadalupe

OATHS OF OFFICE:

- Councilman Bob Bove conducted by Magnolia Mayor BettyAnn Cowling-Carson for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2028.
- Councilwoman Jessica Farrell conducted by Assemblyman Louis D. Greenwald for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2028.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Linda Hall

Councilman Patrick Gilligan
Councilman Bob Bove
Councilwoman Jessica Farrell
Councilman Stephen Gandy
Councilwoman Dawn Martin
Councilman Mike Tolomeo

Police Chief Ron Morello
Fire Chief Michael J. Lemmerman
Borough Clerk and Administrator Michelle Hack

NOMINATION BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT: (One Year Term)

Councilman Gandy made a motion to nominate Councilman Patrick Gilligan as Council President for the year 2026. Councilwoman Farrell seconded the motion. All voted in the affirmative.

OATH OF OFFICE TO COUNCIL PRESIDENT 2026: To: Councilman Patrick Gilligan administered by Assemblywoman Melinda Kane.

APPOINTMENT OF 2026 COUNCIL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Hall read the following Council assignments for 2026 and asked for a motion to accept.

FINANCE AND REVENUE

DIRECTOR: Mike Tolomeo
Assoc. Member: Dawn Martin
Assoc. Member: Stephen Gandy

EMERGENCY SERVICES

DIRECTOR: Jessica Farrell
Assoc. Member: Stephen Gandy
Assoc. Member: Patrick Gilligan

POLICE

DIRECTOR: Patrick Gilligan
Assoc. Member: Bob Bove
Assoc. Member: Dawn Martin

PUBLIC WORKS

DIRECTOR: Stephen Gandy
Assoc. Member: Mike Tolomeo
Assoc. Member: Bob Bove

PUBLIC EVENTS

DIRECTOR: Dawn Martin
Assoc. Member: Mike Tolomeo
Assoc. Member: Jessica Farrell

ORDINANCE/PROPERTY

DIRECTOR: Bob Bove
Assoc. Member: Patrick Gilligan
Assoc. Member: Jessica Farrell

Councilwoman Farrell made the motion to accept the 2026 Council Member assignments, which was seconded Councilman Tolomeo. All voted in the affirmative.

APPOINTMENTS BY MAYOR WITH CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL:

Fire Line Officers: One Year Term

- Chief of Department- Michael J. Lemmerman #6401*
- Deputy Chief- Robert Bove #6402*
- Battalion Chief Brian Martin #6403*
- Captain Brian Worthington Sr. #6404*
- Captain Daniel Camburn #6405*
- Lieutenant Dylan Jess #6406*
- Lieutenant Matthew Meyers #6407*
- Engineer Vincent Jess #6408*
- Safety Officer Stephen Gagliardi #6409*
- Safety Officer Michael Meyers #6410*
- Fire Police- Daniel Kuehnl*

Councilwoman Martin made the motion to accept the 2026 Fire Line Officers, which was seconded Councilman Gilligan. All voted in the affirmative.

APPOINTMENTS BY MAYOR WITH CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL:

Boards and Committees:

- Joint Land Use Board, Class III – *Bob Bove* One Year Term
- Joint Land Use Board, Secretary, *Kristina Rauer* One Year Term
- Board of Education Liaison – *Dawn Martin* One Year Term
- Park Commission Liaison – *Jessica Farrell* One Year Term
- Police Matrons – *Kristina Rauer, Patricia Riebel* One Year Term

Councilman Gandy made the motion to accept the 2026 Boards and Committee appointments, which was seconded Councilman Tolomeo. All voted in the affirmative.

APPOINTMENTS BY MAYOR WITH NO CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL NEEDED:

- Joint Land Use Board, Class II – *Ron Morello* One Year Term
- Joint Land Use Board, Class IV- *Michael Chicolo* Four Year Term
- Joint Land Use Board, Class IV – *Tim Hall* Four Year Term

Board of Health – *Kim Berdine*
Municipal Coordinator of Aging – *Mary Ann D’Agostino*

Three Year Term
One Year Term

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTIONS 01-2026 THROUGH 27-2026 CONSENT AGENDA

Council can request to remove any of the following resolutions from the agenda to be voted on separately.

Councilman Bove made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as read by title only, which was seconded Councilwoman Martin. All voted in the affirmative.

- RES. 2026-01 Appointment of Solicitor – *Jeffrey Brennan, Esq. Baron & Brennan P.A.*
- RES. 2026-02 Appointment of Engineer – *Steven M. Bach- Bach Associates*
- RES. 2026-03 Appointment of Auditor – *Bowman & Company LLP*
- RES. 2026-04 Appointment of Court Personnel
- RES. 2026-05 Appointment of Police Chaplain – *Fr. Rene Canales*
- RES. 2026-06 Appointment of Public Agency Compliance Officer – *Michelle Hack*
- RES. 2026-07 Appointment of Town Historian – *Carole Dadino*
- RES. 2026-08 Appointment of Redevelopment Planners – *Steven M. Bach- Bach Associates*
- RES. 2026-09 Award of Contract for Affordable Housing Planner Consultant Services – *Leah Furey Bruder - LFB Land Planning*
- RES. 2026-10 Appointment of Risk Management Consultant- *Christopher Powell- Hardenbergh Insurance Group*
- RES. 2026-11 Appointment of Statewide Fund Commissioner – *Michelle Hack.*
- RES. 2026-12 Appointment of Special Law Enforcement Officers
- RES. 2026-13 Depositories for Borough Funds and Cash Management Plan
- RES. 2026-14 Time and Place for Meetings
- RES. 2026-15 Publication of Legal Notices
- RES. 2026-16 Parliamentary Procedures
- RES. 2026-17 Temporary Budget for 2026
- RES. 2026-18 Custodian for Borough Facilities
- RES. 2026-19 Authorize Tax Assessor Settle Certain Appeals
- RES. 2026-20 School Crossing Guards
- RES. 2026-21 2026 Annual Holidays
- RES. 2026-22 Approve Bank Signatories
- RES. 2026-23 Establishing Remote Meeting Procedures and Requirements
- RES. 2026-24 VOID
- RES. 2026-25 Appointing Pensions and Benefits Certifying Officer and Certifying Supervisor
- RES. 2026-26 Appointment of Emergency Management Coordinator & Deputy Emergency Management Coordinators

Councilman Bove made the motion to adopt Resolutions# 01-2026 - #26-2026, which was seconded Councilman Gilligan. All voted in the affirmative. Councilwoman Farrell abstained from Resolution #20-2026.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

MAYOR LINDA HALL- Congratulated Councilwoman Farrell and Councilman Bove on their new Councilmember terms; looks forward to working with them, the Borough Staff and the Borough professionals for a prosperous 2026. Welcomed and thanked Commissioner Nash, Assemblywoman Kane, Assemblyman Greenwald and Mayor Cowling-Carson.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT PATRICK GILLIGAN - Congratulated Councilwoman Farrell and Councilman Bove on their new Councilmember terms; Looking forward to making further progress in 2026. Extended wished to the Borough's first responders for a safe and healthy year ahead.

COUNCILMAN BOB BOVE – Offered congratulations to Councilwoman Farrell and thanked the rest of the Governing Body for their support and especially the citizens of the Borough.

COUNCILWOMAN JESSICA FARRELL – Offered congratulations to Councilman Bove; Thanked Chief Morello and Fire Chief Lemmerman for their dedication to public safety.

COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY – Expressed appreciation to Commissioner Nash, Assemblywoman Kane, Assemblyman Greenwald and Mayor Cowling-Carson for their attendance and congratulated Councilwoman Farrell, Councilman Bob Bove and Council President Gilligan.

COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN – Congratulated the Fire Department Line officers on their reappointments; Congratulated Councilwoman Farrell, Councilman Bove and Council President Gilligan stating she is glad to see the 2025 returning for another good year ahead.

COUNCILMAN MIKE TOLOMEO – Looking forward to this year's Council and counting on making further progress in 2026.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Motion to open the meeting to the public for Good and Welfare:

Councilman Tolomeo made the motion which was seconded Councilman Bove. All voted in the affirmative.

Resident Brandon Bliss thanked Mayor and Council for their work on the public events centered around the holiday season.

Motion to close the public portion for Good and Welfare:

Councilman Gilligan made the motion which was seconded Councilman Bove. All voted in the affirmative.

ADJOURN:

Councilwoman Tolomeo made the motion which was seconded Councilman Bove. All voted in the affirmative.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle Hack, RMC
Borough Clerk