

**STRATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY MARCH 12, 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 of 1975, public notice of this meeting has been provided to the Courier Post and The Retrospect and is posted on the Official Bulletin Board Borough Hall.

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 DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF
COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY	MICHELLE HACK, RMC BOROUGH CLERK/ADMIN
COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN	
COUNCILMAN MIKE TOLOMEO	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 12, 2026 Regular Meeting and Executive Session

MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES & EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES:

Motion: Councilman Bove
Second: Councilwoman Farrell
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

PUBLIC PORTION FOR AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

MOTION TO OPEN THE FLOOR:

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

John Gentless Inquired about the lots that Ordinance 02-2026 refers to.

MOTION TO CLOSE THE FLOOR:

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

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

- 2/6 Was the beginning of a series of water pipe bursting and flooded homes during the cold snap we responded to flooded homes on Union Avenue, (2) on Laureba, (2) on Suburban Terrace and (2) underground pipes burst on Warwick Road and Drexel Avenue

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- 2/7 During that same time, we responded to Sterling Vet for a report of a fire, in this case a local vagrant started a fire in the stairwell catching the structure on fire. He was arrested, charged with Arson and he remains in the Camden County Jail.
- 2/10 During the evening hours, we responded to the White Horse near Laurel Road for a report of a driver who had damage done to her vehicle by a homeless man. In this case, the driver refused to give the panhandler money so he proceeded to pour his beer in and on her car and struck the car with the glass bottle as she fled. The vagrant was gone by the time we received the call.
- 2/13 During the evening hours, we responded to Bishop Court apartments for a report of a 7-year-old who called 911 because he thought his father was dead in the stairwell. It turns out the male was highly intoxicated and was sent to Jefferson for evaluation. The case was turned over to DYFS
- 2/22 During the afternoon hours, we arrested a 42-year-old homeless man for criminal mischief. The male used his backpack to break the folding doors at CVS in a fit of rage over his medication. He was sent to the Camden County Jail.
- 2/22 During the morning hours we responded to a home on Drexel for a report of a man down. It turned out the 70-year-old had died of natural causes, many hours earlier.
- During the Blizzard, the Police Department responded to 72 storm related calls, property damage, stuck vehicles, medical, wires, tree debris etc. We've submitted our Preliminary Damage Assessments to County OEM, at this point, there is no Federal Disaster Declaration, so reimbursements are highly unlikely.
- 2/24 Another drug overdose in the restroom of Burger King, 36-year-old from Vincentown was arrived and transported to Jefferson.
- 2/27 A 40-year-old Lindenwold women broke some bones after crashing her E-Bike on ice in the parking lot of burger king.
- 2/28 In separate incidents, two nursing staff members were assaulted treating patients in the emergency room. One suffered a nose injury after a head-but and a second nurse suffered bite and claw wounds attempting to subdue a violent, intoxicated patient. Both individuals were charged with Aggravated Assault.

OEM REPORT: February 2026

1. The Emergency Management Coordinator prepared one Incident Action Plan for the Borough, in preparation for Winter Storm Hernando February 22,23,24, 2026
2. One Emergency Declaration was issued restricting on street parking, permitting front lawn parking, and modifying some municipal services operations during the winter storm.
3. Deputy Coordinator Tom Farrell made a second submission to Camden County DPW for emergency road salt.
4. The Emergency Management Coordinator, managed storm response, clean up, power restoration, school closings and openings in the aftermath of winter Storm Hernando.

FIRE REPORT:

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

	<u>Month</u>	<u>YTD</u>
BUILDINGS	6	10
ALARM SYSTEMS	10	17
DWELLINGS	0	0

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INVESTIGATIONS	6	11
MOTORVEHICLE ACCIDENTS/RESCUE	6	12
WIRES, TREES DOWN	3	3
BRUSH	0	0
VEHICLE	1	1
ASSIST EMS/POLICE/PUBLIC	8	14
DRILLS	3	5
	<u>Alarms:</u>	<u>Drills:</u>
Monthly:	40	3
Year to Date:	68	5

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 February 2026.

Total number of properties inspected:	85
Total number of notices:	12
Total number of summonses:	0
Total number of emails:	75
Total number of phone calls:	90

BOROUGH FINANCIAL REPORT

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

Balance as of 1-31-2026:	\$ 1,016,196.08
Total Receipts:	\$ 3,733,350.42
Total Disbursements:	\$ 2,497,789.00
Balance as of 2-28-2026	\$ 2,251,757.50
Capital, Sewer and Trust Funds:	\$ 2,786,329.78

EMERGENCY SERVICES:

Councilwoman Farrell presented the report for Stratford Ambulance for the month of February 2025. There were 72 calls for ambulance service, with a total for the year of 142.

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

Adult arrests	19	Juvenile arrests	0
Assaults to Police	0	Simple assaults Complaints	5
Criminal Mischief Complaints	6	Harassment complaints	7
Other investigations and complaints	612	Burglary	0
Robberies	0	Thefts (9) in the amount of \$	2778.00
Stolen property recovered \$	678	Motor vehicle thefts	0
D.W.I. arrests	5	Narcotics arrests	5
Traffic summonses issued	366	Motor vehicle accidents	21
injuries from accidents	2	Alarm Activations	21

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Total Crime Reports Taken 82

Total Calls for Police Service 703

PUBLIC WORKS AND LIGHTING:

Councilman Gandy presented the DPW and the Sewer Reports for February:

Stormwater Compliance

1. Cleaned storm inlets 2 times in February.

DPW

1. No pot holes were repaired in February, but DPW recorded 22 locations where pot holes need to be filled in March.
2. Brush Pickup Done Bi-Weekly in February.
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

1. Solid Waste Tonnage – Records were not available at the time of this report being typed.
2. Single Stream Recycling – 34.1Ton resulting in \$928.88 in tipping fees at Omni Recycling Group.

Vehicle Maintenance

1. All DPW Vehicles are being scheduled for routine services, and minor repairs over the next few months.
2. DPW Dump truck needed a rim/tire repair that happened during one of the snow storms, which was performed at Tire Corral in Clementon.
3. DPW Chipper was repaired after needing a service and new chute, and the work was done by Harry's Tree Service.

Facility maintenance

1. Cleaning DPW Facility on a weekly basis.
2. Playground inspections done weekly.
3. DPW/Sanitation employees emptied out the Sewer Jetter Garage, and made room for vehicles and tools inside.
4. The DPW cleared leaves from the library roof due to leaves building up by the drain spouts.
5. ALL Fire Extinguishers in Public Buildings were also inspected in February.
6. DPW conducted Building Inspections in February at ALL public buildings.
7. DPW replaced 6 ceiling tiles at the library, due to a ceiling leak.
8. DPW was called to the library after hours after the ceiling had fallen in again due to water. The work was unable to be performed by DPW, and the library was advised to contact a roofing company.

Seasonal Services

1. DPW had endured 2 snow storms in February, resulting in 15+ inches of snow accumulated for the month of February.
2. Two (2) Plows needed repairs due to usage in the storms, and the repairs were done at Laurel Lawn Services.

Sewer Call outs

1. There were 18 sewer call outs total in the month of February, 15 of them being residents and 3 of them for pump station related issues. We had to perform Jetter operations for 3 of the residents' house calls, due to our Sewer Main being impassable at those times. All blockages were cleared after performing Jetting Operations.

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PUBLIC EVENTS:

The Miss and Little Miss Stratford Pageants will be held on Friday, April 24 at Yellin School. The event organizers extend their appreciation to the following businesses for their generous support: Baron & Brennan, Papparone, Garrison Architects, and Capone Photography. The annual Egg Hunt is scheduled for Saturday, March 28 at Parkview School, with a rain date of March 29. Nutri-Serve is thanked for providing lunch for the event.

OLD BUSINESS

**ORDINANCE #01-2026 ESTABLISHING 2026 SALARIES AND SALARY RANGES FOR OFFICERS AND
Second Reading EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF STRATFORD**

Open Floor for Public Hearing:

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

None No one came forth to speak therefore closing the public hearing for this ordinance.

Close Floor to Public Hearing:

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

MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE #01-2026

Motion: Councilman Bove
Second: Councilwoman Farrell
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

**ORDINANCE #02-2026 AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STRATFORD, COUNTY
Second Reading OF CAMDEN, APPROVING AN AMENDED REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR
THE DESIGNATED REDEVELOPMENT AREA IDENTIFIED AS BLOCK 62,
LOTS 2, 4, 7 & 18 ON THE TAX MAP OF THE BOROUGH OF STRATFORD**

Open Floor for Public Hearing:

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

Russ Conrad Asked for clarification as to where site is located.

Close Floor to Public Hearing:

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

MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE #: 02-2026

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

ORDINANCE #03-2026 **ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF STRATFORD AMENDING CHAPTER
Second Reading 17.05 "AFFORDABLE HOUSING", TO REPEAL THE EXISTING SECTION
17.05.10 AND REPLACE IT IN ITS ENTIRETY TO INCLUDE UPDATED
STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS AS SET FORTH HEREIN AND TO UPDATE
SECTION 17.05.020 ENTITLED "AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
FEES"**

Open Floor for Public Hearing:

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

Diane Claypool Asked the Council who pays the development fees, confirming it's not the
Stratford taxpayers.

Close Floor to Public Hearing:

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

MOTION TO ADOPT ORDINANCE #:03-2026

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

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RESOLUTIONS #42-2026, and #47-2026 through #56-2026 WILL BE ACTED UPON AS A 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: Councilman Bove
Second: Councilman Gandy
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

- 42-2026 MEMORIALIZING THE SALARY FOR BOROUGH EMPLOYEES SERVING THE JOINT LAND USE BOARD
- 47-2026 ADOPTING A FORMAL PURCHASING POLICY FOR THE BOROUGH OF STRATFORD
- 48-2026 AUTHORIZE APPLICATION FOR 2026-STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAY & TRAFFIC SAFETY, DISTRACTED DRIVER ENFORCEMENT MOBILIZATION GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7000.00
- 49-2026 AUTHORIZING AND ADOPTING AN AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MANUAL
- 50-2026 ADOPTING THE AFFIRMATIVE MARKING PLAN PURSUANT TO FOURTH ROUND AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPLIANCE
- 51-2026 AMENDING THE TEMPORARY BUDGET FOR 2026
- 52-2026 DESIGNATING AN ON STREET HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACE FOR THE DESIGNATED AREA ADJACENT TO 135 LAUREBA AVENUE
- 53-2026 AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH CLERK TO ADVERTISE TO RECEIVE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)s FOR BOND COUNSEL
- 54-2026 AUTHORIZING THE USE OF NEW JERSEY STATE CONTRACT #17-FLEET-00805 (GLOBE) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL PUBLIC CONTRACTS LAW
- 55-2026 ADOPTING AN AMENDED SPENDING PLAN FOR THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND
- 56-2026 DESIGNATING PUBLICATIONS FOR LEGAL NOTICES

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS #42-2026, and #47-2026 through #56-2026

Motion: Councilman Tolomeo
Second: Councilman Bove
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

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MERCANTILE LICENSE APPROVALS: None

- CASE# 2026-01416 The Cohen Law Firm
117 E. Laurel Road
Stratford NJ 08084

- CASE # 2026-01398 Manpreet Singh for Satnam Petroleum LLC
T/A US Gas & Diesel & Mini- Mart
1 North White Horse Pike
Stratford, NJ 08084

- CASE# 2026-01406 Mavis Discount Tire
401 South White Horse Pike
Stratford, NJ 08084

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MERCANTILE LICENSES:

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

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

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

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

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

MAYOR LINDA HALL – Commended all of the Departments that worked together on this most recent storm relief efforts and Atlantic City Electric for their constant communications efforts and working to restore power. Gave an update on county/state grant applications that are being applied for.

COUNCILMAN GILLIGAN – Stated appreciation for the Borough staff and volunteers work on the most recent storm and commented that the Parks are due for a layer of mulch.

COUNCILMAN BOB BOVE – Asked the public for their patience while the Council navigates this year’s budget season discussing the increased costs that the Borough cannot control.

COUCILWOMAN JESSICA FARRELL – Congratulated the newest member of the Stratford Board of Education and thanked the public for their patience on yet another storm, commenting on the DPWs improvement from the first storm in December until now.

COUNCILMAN STEPHEN GANDY – Commented on the young staff that the Borough now employees and all have done a great job learning how to handle storms, noting it’s been many years since this area has seen snowfall

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like we have experienced this season. Gave an update the County's effort on the homeless population from the PATCO station.

COUNCILWOMAN DAWN MARTIN – Reminded all of the deadline for the Hometown Heroes Banner program, the History event at Stratford Community Center with Ms. Carol Dadino, and the upcoming Stratford BOE meeting dates changes.

COUNCILMAN TOLOMEO – Spoke on the reliability of Stratford's first responders being exemplary and how the DPW has improved since the beginning of the winter- thanked all groups for their dedication and long hours to the Borough this past winter.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

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

Motion: Councilman Gandy
Second: Councilwoman Martin
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

Russ Conrad Commented on this neighbor at the Laurel Manor parking in an unauthorized area and that's its disruptive to his and the neighboring properties. The Borough engineer will look into the matter.

John Gentless Also commented on the parking at Laurel Manor; inquired if Jefferson was expanding, status of grant at Quaker Store; the AED machine at Borough Hall and a tree at Jefferson & Grand.

Orum Snow Inquired if the Borough would entertain the plan of a community garden at the library, he was advised to present a plan to the Borough Hall. Suggested a magnet be made for instructions on who to call for utility services.

Diane Claypoole Asked what can be done about speeders on Atlantic Avenue, suggesting blinking/digital signage. It was noted this is a County-owned road therefore limiting what can be done.

Rob Stone Stated he would be interested in volunteering on the Historic Preservation Committee.

Stan Panza Asked for an update to the suite with Laurel Mills and for an update on E-bike legislation.

MOTION TO CLOSE THE GOOD AND WELFARE PORTION:

Motion: Councilman Tolomeo
Second: Councilwoman Farrell
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

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MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion: Councilman Bove
Second: Councilman Tolomeo
In Favor: All
Opposed: None

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Michelle Hack, RMC
Borough Clerk and Administrator