

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST
WORK SESSION Minutes
August 11, 2025
7:30 PM**

The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, have been satisfied by the inclusion of the date, time and place of this meeting in the annual schedule of meetings of this Governing Body. Such schedule of meetings is posted at Borough Hall, on the Borough website and was published in the Record and Star Ledger and was filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

Mayor Bernstein invited all in attendance to join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor Bernstein, Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Absent: None

Also Present: Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator
Deena Rosendahl, Borough Attorney

ORDINANCE (INTRODUCTION):

ORDINANCE NO. 1165-25 A CAPITAL ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$90,000 FOR DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS TO WAKELEE FIELD TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST AND TO APPROPRIATE \$90,000 FROM THE OPEN SPACE TRUST FUND.

Council President Slowikowski a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No.1165-25 and it be published as required by law with notice of Public Hearing to be held on September 9, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jiang.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING (ADOPTION): (none)

Resolution 143-25 Municipal CDBG Representatives

Ms. Falkenstern asked the Council for the Council to appoint a member and a backup. Council President Slowikowski volunteered to serve, and Councilmember Marks agreed to serve as the alternate.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marks and seconded by Councilmember Collins to approve Resolution 143-25.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Resolution 144-25 Open Space Ballot Question

A motion was made by Councilmember Reiss and seconded by Councilmember Collins to approve Resolution 144-25.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Resolution 149-25 Capital Budget Amendment

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Collins to approve Resolution 149-25.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Work Session Discussion Items:

Engineering Report

Ms. Falkenstern reviewed the monthly engineering report noting that the unimproved roads projects is nearly completion. She reported that for NJDOT 2024 project, Stewart St. work is complete. Stelfox work has been paused again after the new subcontractor ran into another issue and asked for a new survey the plan is to continue work on 8/13/25. Lastly, Ms. Falkenstern reported that the Fire Department asked if the Borough would consider widening the entrance to Duane Lane at Anderson Ave. She asked Councilmember Fox if she knew the history of the old lighting and benches on that corner. Councilmember Fox reported that the builder of the Woodlands project had offered to widen the road, but the Planning Board rejected due to push back from the residents.

She reported that she was not aware of any historic significance to the benches. The Mayor and Council all agreed that it is a safety concern and there was a consensus to ask the Borough engineer to conduct a survey and make suggestions on widening the entrance at Anderson Ave. Mayor Bernstein suggested we attempt to save the lighting, but not the benches due to their state of disrepair and lack of historic significance. Mayor Bernstein then asked about the work necessary for the arboretum dam. Ms. Falkenstern said she will consult the Borough Engineer on options and funding for the dam.

Use of Train Station / Bank Building

Ms. Falkenstern reported that she shared feedback with the Economic Development Committee on both spots, including many ideas for both sit down restaurants and coffee shops. She asked the Council if they wanted to issue a new bid for the train station. Ms. Falkenstern clarified the difference in process for the bank building which is in the redevelopment zone and the Train Station, which is historic and ownership will be maintained by the Borough enabling the use of a liquor license. The Council discussed different ideas and the process. Mayor Bernstein suggested that the Council decide this evening if they want to reissue a bid. The discussion of terms will need to be in closed session, but if there is a consensus a bid could be authorized this evening. Ms. Rosendahl cautioned the Council that the bid should be as specific as possible because they will be required to accept the highest bid.

Mayor Bernstein reported that many different entities have approached him with different ideas. A discussion ensued on the process and allowable uses in the redevelopment zone.

Councilmember Fox made a motion to open to the public to comment on the two properties being discussed. Councilmember Collins seconded the motion, and it was approved by all on a voice vote.

Speakers:

Ryan Glasberg

Mr. Glasberg asked for clarification on whether a vent would be allowed to pierce the roof for a restaurant at the Train Station. Ms. Rosendahl clarified that no exterior surfaces could be breached. Mr. Glasberg added that he was considering a proposal for a larger redevelopment project but the landlords of the properties on Hardenburgh have not been open to selling.

Andrew Jacobs

Mr. Jacobs stated that he had visited the bank property and noted that it needs extensive renovations including first floor plumbing and suggested it would be difficult and expensive to keep the building. He asked if the Borough would consider partnering with a developer to assist in the cost. The Mayor answered that the only way the Borough would be able to partner is with a PILOT agreement. Councilmember Jiang noted that the redevelopment designation is to incentivize a builder with a long-term PILOT agreement.

The owner of Yassou Mykonis said he has looked at the Train Station to consider a restaurant, and he envisions a sit-down restaurant and not a coffee shop. He would consider responding to a bid with a concept for a restaurant with an international menu

and utilize outdoor seating while possibly using his current kitchen. He asked Ms. Rosendahl to clarify the bid process.

There being no other members of the public wishing to speak, Councilmember Marks made a motion to close to the public. Councilmember Collins seconded the motion, and it was approved by all on a voice vote.

Mayor Bernstein then reported that he met with the Police Department and the County Engineers to review the intersection of Anderson Avenue and County Rd. and the County has reported that they will explore new signage and striping as appropriate to address safety concerns. Mayor Bernstein and Ms. Falkenstern gave a schedule update on the new traffic signal at the corner of Piermont/County and Hardenburgh.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Bernstein asked if any member would like to have any resolution removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately. (none)

Mayor Bernstein asked if any member would like to abstain from voting on any resolution on the consent agenda. (none)

Mayor Bernstein asks for a motion to accept the consent agenda (with any abstentions noted)

Consent Agenda:

Resolution No. 145-25	Return of Performance Bonds
Resolution No. 146-25	Award of Contract for Wakelee Field Drainage Improvements
Resolution No. 147-25	IWS Contract Extension
Resolution No. 148-25	Authorizing Engineering Service – Compost Site Remediation
Resolution No. 150-25	SSA Bergen County -Flu Vaccine Administration
Resolution No. 151-25	Soil Moving – 17 Laurel Rd.
Resolution No. 152-25	Soil Moving – 15 Brenner
Resolution No. 153-25	Authorizing Capital Purchase - DPW
Resolution No. 154-25	Payment of Bills

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Reiss to approve the consent agenda.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

Approval of Minutes:

May 12, 2025 Work Session Meeting

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to approve Resolution the minutes.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

Meeting Open to the Public

Councilmember Fox made a motion to open to the public. Councilmember Collins seconded the motion, and it was approved by all on a voice vote.

Ryan Glasberg

Ms. Glasberg asked the Borough to consider a yield or stop sign at the corner of Madison and Stelfox. Ms. Falkenstern said she will consult the Police Department and ask them to look at the intersection and make a recommendation.

There being no other members of the public wishing to speak, Councilmember Collins made a motion to close to the public. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion, and it was approved by all on a voice vote.

Closed Session 2025-008

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 provides for a Public Body to go into a Closed Session during a Public Meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the Borough of Demarest has deemed it necessary to go into closed session to discuss matters which are exempted from the public.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough of Demarest that the Governing Body shall go into closed session on August 11, 2025 for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12:

- 1. Potential Litigation*
- 2. Negotiations*

Councilmember Fox made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-008 to convene a close session. Councilmember Collins seconded the motion, and it was approved by all on a voice vote. Mayor Bernstein noted that action may be taken.

The Council returned to open session and Ms. Falkenstern asked for a motion to approve additional engineering services related to the Stelfox project, not to exceed \$19,500.00.

Councilmember Collins made a motion to approve the expense. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

There being no further business before the Council, Councilmember Reiss made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jiang and approved by all on a voice vote.

The meeting was therefore adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Falkenstern, RMC
Borough Clerk