

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST  
REGULAR MEETING Minutes  
July 28, 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.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

**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  
Jason Gangi, DPW Director  
Nick Chelius, Borough Engineer  
P.O. Cameron  
Jeff Geisenheimer, EMS  
Carl Pavlik, Deputy Fire Chief

**Ordinances (Introduction): (none)**

**Ordinance Public Hearing (Adoption): (none)**

**Discussion**

Project Details for Paving of Unimproved Portions of Orchard Rd. & Wellwood Rd.

Mr. Chelius provided the below information concerning the options for this upcoming paving and road reconstruction project.

Below is a brief description of each plan along with pros and cons for each option:

- **Concept Plan #1A – Wellwood Road – 22’ Wide Cartway Width**
  - Pros:
    - Proposed alignment intersects Hardenburg Avenue at 90°.
    - Least perceived encroachments onto properties (max 3.9’ at #257 Hardenburgh Avenue).
    - No tree removals.
    - No impact to the existing wall at 257 Hardenburgh.
  - Cons:

- 22' wide cartway width is less ideal than the 24' wide.
  - Centerline alignment isn't directly in the centerline of the ROW (27' at NW and 23' at SE).
  - Substandard curb radii at the eastern intersection with Hardenburgh Avenue to keep existing pole location.
  - Sections of existing gas main is directly below proposed curb. Could require gas main relocations.
  - Solar lights at #9 Wellwood Road will need to be relocated
- **Concept Plan #1B - Wellwood Road – 24' Wide Cartway Width**
  - Pros:
    - 24' wide width is a standard width.
    - Proposed alignment intersects Hardenburgh Avenue at 90°.
    - No impact to the existing wall at 257 Hardenburgh.
  - Cons:
    - More perceived encroachments onto properties (max 4.6' at #251 Hardenburgh Avenue).
    - Centerline alignment isn't directly in the centerline of the ROW (26' at NW and 24' at SE).
    - Substandard curb radii at the eastern intersection with Hardenburgh Avenue to keep existing pole location.
    - Sections of existing gas main are directly below proposed curb. Could require gas main relocations.
    - Solar lights at #9 Wellwood Road will need to be relocated.
    - Two (2) tree removals (18"/20").
- **Concept Plan #1C - Wellwood Road – 24' Wide Cartway Width**
  - Pros:
    - 24' wide width is a standard width.
    - Proposed alignment intersects Hardenburgh Avenue at 90°.
    - No impact to the existing wall at 257 Hardenburgh.
    - Centerline Alignment is directly in the center of the ROW.
  - Cons:
    - More perceived encroachments onto northern properties (max 5.7' at #251 Hardenburgh Avenue).
    - Substandard curb radii at the eastern intersection with Hardenburgh Avenue to keep existing pole location (greater than concept 1A and 1B though).
    - Large sections of existing gas main are directly below proposed curb. Could require gas main relocations.
    - Two (2) tree removals (18"/20")
- **Concept Plan #1D - Wellwood Road – 24' Wide Cartway Width**
  - Pros:
    - 24' wide width is a standard width.
    - Proposed alignment intersects Hardenburgh Avenue at 90°.
    - No impact to the existing wall at 257 Hardenburgh.
    - No utilities will be beneath the curb.
  - Cons:
    - More perceived encroachments onto northern properties (max 8.9' at #9 Wellwood Road).
    - Centerline alignment isn't directly in the centerline of the ROW (22' at NW and 28' at SE).
    - Substandard curb radii at the eastern intersection with Hardenburgh Avenue to keep existing pole location (greater than concept 1A, 1B and 1C though).
    - Four (4) tree removals (2 x 18"/2 x 20")

- Utility Pole Relocation required (Sta. 2+15)
- **Concept Plan #2A – Orchard Road – 24’ Wide Cartway Width – Best Fit**
  - **Note that we prepared this concept with two different end treatments – a straight dead end and a cul-de-sac.**
  - We took a slightly different approach with Orchard Road compared to Wellwood Road. We prepared the first concept plan using an existing line of best fit from the existing roadway and the result is the road shifting within the ROW rather than an even offset. We felt this was the best fit for this roadway because the properties and their landscaping/curbs are all over the place and felt this would change the characteristic of the roadway the least.
  - There are small impacts to all the properties but nothing significant.
  - This option results in no pole relocations and three (33”, 12” 16”) tree removals. Various landscaping beds and hedgerows will also need to be trimmed/regraded once we get to the final design.
  - This Concept Plan can also be shifted in 1’ from each side for a 22’ wide cartway width, which would reduce all depicted disturbances by 1’.
- **Concept Plan #2B – Orchard Road – 24’ Wide Cartway Width – Center of ROW**
  - This option is a less-detailed Concept Plan that depicts where the roadway centerline would be located within the direct center of the ROW.
  - This results in severe perceived encroachments onto properties such as 159/165 Orchard Street and 81 Anderson Avenue.
  - This option would result in a significantly more expensive project, but we wanted to provide it just in case the Borough wanted to explore this.
  - If this is something you want to move forward with and need to see a more detailed Concept Plan, we can prepare that.

Councilmember Fox made a motion to open the meeting to the public on the subject of Orchard and Wellwood paving. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins and approved by all on a voice vote.

Carl Satnak  
160 Orchard

Mr. Satnak asked about the turn radius and whether the footbridge would be affected. He added that water pools at the end of his driveway. Mr. Chelius noted that after he is given direction by the Council, he will visit and review the portion near his driveway to ensure the new plan addresses flooding and ponding.

Debra Satnak  
160 Orchard

Ms. Satnak asked about the proposed curb. Mr. Chelius indicated that laidback Belgian block is proposed.

Scott Laski  
150 Orchard

Ms. Laski asked is runoff would go to the stream. Mr. Chelius indicated that yes, runoff would generally head toward the stream, but drainage will be addressed during the design phase.

David Singer  
172 Orchard

Mr. Singer is concerned about a paved road adding to speeding on the road.

Bob Fendell  
171 Orchard

Mr. Fendell sked about the proposed pitch of the new road.

Another resident of Orchard who did not provide his full name expressed drainage concerns as well.

Mr. Chelius reiterated that drainage would be addressed further in the design phase, but he will note the spots on the road that the residents have reported concern. Additionally, he will work with Mr. Gangi to review areas of the road that commonly flood.

There being no other residents wishing to speak, Councilmember Collins made a motion to close the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Council President Slowikowski and approved by all on a voice vote.

The Mayor thanked the residents for all their input and the Council discussed the options. Deputy Fire Chief Pavlik asked the Council to consider that if the road is not made wide enough emergency vehicles may have difficulty turning around. The Council asked Mr. Chelius to proceed with the plans that are least intrusive on the residents and save as many trees as possible that still provide proper width for emergency vehicles. Mr. Chelius, Ms. Falkenstern, and Mr. Gangi will meet on site with the Fire Chief to review the final width needed for emergency vehicles.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mayor Bernstein asked that Resolution No. 138-25 be removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately due to a revision, approved by Counsel, that was made late in the day.

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

Mayor Bernstein asks 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. 139-25	Approving the Advertisement of Online Auction of Surplus Borough Property
Resolution No. 140-25	Approving Advertisement of Bids for Solid Waste Collection
Resolution No. 141-25	Approving Consulting Services
Resolution No. 142-25	Payment of Bills

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

### **Roll Call:**

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

**Resolution No. 138-25** Approving Administrative Agent – 95 County Rd.

Mayor Bernstein reviewed the changes made late today to the legal language.

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox and seconded by Councilmember Collins to approve Resolution No. 138-25 as amended.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Approval of Minutes:**

March 10, 2025 Work Session Minutes

A motion was made by Andrea Slowikoski and seconded by Councilmember Jiang.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Mayor's Report**

Mayor Bernstein discussed the issues that the Borough has faced on Stelfox and noted the Governing Body's disappointment with the ongoing problems that have been encountered, mostly attributable to the concrete subcontractor. He also noted that earlier this evening they had a long public discussion about the upcoming paving reconstruction of Orchard and Wellwood Rds. He reported that the Council decided to have this open discussion and solicit feedback from the residents as a response to the dissatisfaction expressed by some residents on Stelfox in reaction to the reconstruction plan that was approved. He further stated that while the Council would ultimately have to decide the best plan for the long-term improvements even if some residents disagree, he is happy to add this new step to hear from residents before final design decisions are made.

**Council Committee Reports**

Finance & Personnel (Slowikowski)

Council President Slowikowski congratulated Andrea Johe on her appointment as the CFO and she noted that she hopes her taking the job will promote stability that has been lacking in the department. She then reported that the Swim Club has some discounts available and details are their website. She noted she is proud of the new board for the progress they have made revitalizing the club.

Ordinance (Fox)

No Report

DPW & Recreation (Marks)

Councilmember Marks thanked the DPW for their work over the summer on the fields. He then reported on the upcoming recreation events including Demarest Day. He noted that fundraising has been slow, and they are hoping that some more donations will come in before the event.

#### Economic Development (Jiang)

Councilmember Jiang reported that he had no report, but the committee's work is continuing, and he hopes to have an update for the public in the coming months.

#### Police and OEM (Reiss)

Councilmember Reiss reviewed the Police Department's monthly activity. He reported that the Police Department is meeting with the County Road Department in hopes to improve safety at the intersection of Anderson Ave. and County Road.

#### Fire and EMS (Collins)

Councilmember Collins noted that the intersection of Park St. and Hardenburgh has been improved to note "Do Not Block the Box" and he thanked the DPW for getting this done in the hopes that it will allow emergency vehicles passage during rush hour.

### **Reports of Borough Officials**

#### Borough Administrator

Ms. Falkenstern reported that there has been an increase in requests from residents without curbs asking to install curbs. She would like the Council to consider how they would like to handle these types of requests. The Council discussed different options and said they would like the Planning Board to weigh in as well. Councilmember Fox will bring the issue to the Board and report back. Ms. Falkenstern reported that the road work at the intersection of Hardenburgh and County Rd. would begin next week although the signal itself will have to wait until the backordered equipment is received.

#### Borough Attorney

No report.

#### Borough Treasurer

#### Ambulance

Mr. Gesseinheimer reviewed the monthly activity of the department and thanked the PD, DPW and FD for their cooperation. Additionally, he added that the EMS is in need of volunteers.

#### Fire Chief

Deputy Fire Chief Pavlik reported on the monthly activity and the recent training of the FD. He reported that the new truck should be on the road by August. Ms. Falkenstern asked Deputy Chief Pavlik to ensure that the report of a recent incident at the school involving a roofing contractor so that she can ensure that the contractor had the proper permits in place.

#### Police Chief

Officer Cameron was at the meeting representing the Police Department. He reported that the Department led by Lt. DeGreco was working with the Bergen County Road Department on improving Safety at the intersection of Anderson Ave. and County Rd.

#### DPW Director

Mr. Gangi reported on the activity of his department, including field maintenance.

Councilmember Reiss made a motion to open the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox and approved by all on a voice vote.

#### Linda Cetta

Ms. Cetta reported on the work of the Shade Tree Commission including their desire for fall tree planting, plantings on County Rd near the school and the upcoming cemetery shrubs. She talked

about the Commission plans for Stelfox mitigation including the planting of 15 minor trees. Mayor Bernstein asked if a plan with types, sizes and locations would be provided. Ms. Cetta indicated that she will have it for the Council to review when the project is complete. Ms. Falkenstern talked about the purchasing procedures that must be followed and asked Ms. Cetta to check in with her to discuss these procedures when their recommendation is complete. Lastly, she provided a proposal to the entire Council of proposed plantings to improve Borough Hall.

Jean Miller, Principal of the Academy of Holy Angels

Ms. Miller asked for clarification on the new parking restrictions on Academy Lane. She also expressed frustration that signs were only added near the school and not on the residential portion. Mr. Gangi said that more signs are on order. Ms. Miller then expressed disappointment with the past public comments of Academy Lane Association President. She explained past issues the school administration and the Association have experienced including the lack of maintenance of the trees the Association is responsible for. She expressed concern for the safety of the students concerning traffic on Hillside Ave. Mayor Bernstein noted that issues with County roads need to be addressed to Bergen County. Ms. Miller said she does not believe that the school is being treated fairly and is being targeted differently than other schools. Mayor Bernstein noted that he met with officials at the school more than 18 months ago to try and assist with the conversation or help come up with ideas to address the parking issues and the school did not follow through with the discussion. He said he is happy to assist in any way the school needs to work through these issues. He also reported that there are certain parking restrictions around nearly every school in the Borough.

There being no other members of the public wishing to speak, Councilmember Fox made a motion to close the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins

### **Meeting Open to the Public**

Councilmember Fox made a motion to open the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and approved by all on a voice vote.

### **Closed Session Resolution 2025-007**

**TITLE: TO AUTHORIZE THE CONVENING OF A CLOSED SESSION**

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*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 July 28, 2025 for the following reasons as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12:*

- 1. Potential Litigation*

Councilmember Collins made a motion approve Resolution 2025-007 to adjourn to closed session. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and approved by all on a voice vote. Mayor Bernstein noted that it was possible the Council would take action when they return to open session.

The Council returned to open session and Council President Slowikowski made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox and approved by all on a voice vote.

The meeting was therefore adjourned at 9:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Julie Falkenstern, RMC*  
Borough Clerk