

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST  
WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**June 2, 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 publication of the date, time and place of this meeting in the Record and Star Ledger. The meeting notice is posted at Borough Hall, on the Borough website and filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

**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  
Nick Chelius, Borough Engineer  
Peter Suh, CFO  
Andrea Diekmann Johe, Deputy Tax Collector  
Liz Shick, Borough Auditor

**Ordinances (Introduction):**

**ORDINANCE NO. 1164-25 AMENDING CHAPTER 163 – TREES**

Councilmember Fox made a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No. 1164-25, and it published in the Bergen Record with notice of Public Hearing to be held on June 23, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

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**Ordinance Public Hearing (Adoption):**

**ORDINANCE NO. 1163-25 AN ORDINANCE BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST AMENDING THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REPEAL {CHAPTER 100 SECTIONS 1-20}; TO ADOPT A NEW {CHAPTER 100 SECTIONS 100-1 TO 100-88}; TO ADOPT FLOOD HAZARD MAPS; TO DESIGNATE A FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Councilmember Fox made a motion to open the Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 1163-25. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Reiss.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, Councilmember fox made a motion to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins and approved by all on a voice vote.

Councilmember Fox then made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1163-25 with notice of final passage to be published in the Bergen Record. Council President Slowikowski seconded the motion.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution 099-25 Approval for estimated tax bills**

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Council President Slowikowski to approve Resolution 099-25.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution 100-25 Waiver of Reading the Budget in Full**

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Fox to approve Resolution 100-25.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution 101-25 Adoption of the Budget (Public Hearing)**

Mayor Bernstein asked if anyone from the public has questions or comments before the adoption of the 2024 Budget.

Speaker(s): None

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, Mayor Bernstein asked for a motion to approve the resolution adopting the 2025 Budget.

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Collins to approve the resolution adopting the 2025 Budget.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution 102-25 Authorizing Design & Bidding Services for NJDOT FY2025 Paving Brenner & Evergreen Places**

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Reiss to approve the resolution.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution No. 107-25 Authorizing Advertisement of Bid for Train Station**

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski to approve the resolution. Mayor Bernstein, in response to a member of the public, gave a brief description of the nature of the resolution. The Borough Attorney clarified that the meeting was not presently open to the public, but the Council could discuss it. Councilmember Fox noted that she did not have the complete bid package in her packet. The Borough Administrator noted that it was sent to the Council separately and not available to the public so as not to allow any unfair advantage to any bidder until it is approved and advertised properly and available to anyone in public at the same time. Mayor Bernstein directed Mr. Cywinski in the audience that he could ask questions during the public portion of the meeting. Councilmember Jiang seconded the motion offered by Council President Slowikowski to approve the resolution.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

**Resolution No. 113-25 Authorizing Design & Bidding Services for 2025 Unimproved Roads Project -Orchard Rd. and Wellwood Rd.**

Before soliciting a motion on the resolution, Mayor Bernstein noted that affected homeowners would be notified as to when the design would be discussed in public.

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded Council President Slowikowski to approve the resolution.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Work Session Discussion Items:**

**Engineer’s Report**

Mr. Chelius reviewed the monthly engineer’s report noting that Stelfox road improvement work had restarted. He advised that the Prescott and Forest road project would be completed in approximately 1-2 weeks. He reported that the Riverside Coop paving would commence in June and that he was continuing to monitor the repairs at Deerhill/Duck Pond and anticipated completion within a week.

**Film Permits**

Ms. Falkenstern asked the Council to reconsider updates that were sent to the Ordinance Committee and Economic Development Committee so that the Borough would be better prepared to participate in larger film projects with streaming networks that have shown interest in Demarest as a filming location. Councilmember Jiang asked if the ordinance incorporates usage of the Borough Police and DPW. Ms. Falkenstern stated that the draft that has been circulated is the model ordinance that may need some revisions to be more appropriate for Demarest.

**Consent Agenda**

Mayor Bernstein asked if any member would like to have any resolution removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately. Councilmember Fox requested that Resolution 111-25 be removed from the consent agenda.

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. 103-25 | Authorizing Contract for Riverside Cooperative Paving                            |
| Resolution No. 104-25 | Authorizing Construction Administration Services -Riverside Cooperative Paving   |
| Resolution No. 105-25 | Release of Escrow  |
| Resolution No. 106-25 | Authorizing Tax Refund – Overpayment   |
| Resolution No. 108-25 | Authorizing Advertisement of Bid for Wakelee Field Drainage Improvements-Phase I |
| Resolution No. 109-25 | Authorizing SSA – NVD School Security  |
| Resolution No. 110-25 | Authorizing SSA – Bergen County 911 Services                                     |
| Resolution No. 112-25 | Payment of Bills   |

**Roll Call:**

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

**Resolution No. 111-25** Authorizing Sewer Connection Agreement 11 Duck Pond Rd. - Alpine, NJ

Councilmember Fox asked about the notion in the agreement of TBD for annual fees. Ms. Falkenstern explained that the CFO is attempting to clarify the proper way to assess the annual fee and the agreement was already approved by a previous council. She has discussed with Borough Attorney who is comfortable with the language. Ms. Rosendahl added that all other provisions are specifically included and that annual sewer fees are either charged by a calculation or a flat fee and once the CFO confirms that it cannot be challenged and the Borough of Alpine and the homeowner have agreed to this so she is comfortable with the Council approving the agreement.

A motion to approve the resolution was then offered by Councilmember Fox and seconded by Councilmember Collins.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Minutes for Approval**

March 24, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

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

**Roll Call:**

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

March 24, 2025 Closed Session Minutes

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Marks to approve the minutes.

**Roll Call:**

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

## **Meeting Open to the Public**

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski to pen the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox and approved by all on a voice vote.

Linda Cetta

Ms. Cetta shared comments on behalf of the Shade Tree Commission on Ordinance 1164-25. She noted that she received a draft of an ordinance on Friday and would request more time for review by the commission before the ordinance is considered for adoption. She then gave comments for revisions that the Commission would like to see. Councilmember Fox asked if there were suggestions from Shade Tree Commission. Ms. Cetta said that they do not have suggestions, but they would like it discussed. Mayor Bernstein asked if the Shade Tree Commission has discussed the ordinance provisions and if so if they have a position or suggestions. She answered that they did not, but continued to offer feedback. She noted concerns with some terminology and enforcement. Councilmember Collins assured Ms. Cetta that tonight was only an introduction and now is the time for comments and that all comments and suggestions would be considered and revisions are possible before final adoption.

Ray Cwynski

Mr. Cwynski asked if there was a redline version to review. Mayor Bernstein and Councilmember Fox explained that this was a newly created document so no that it is not available. Mr. Cwynski commented on the language determining the size of trees and asked the Council to consider an update. Councilmember Fox took down his comments for consideration. Mr. Cwynski stated that the former Council considered a similar use of the train station in the past and advised that they should check on any deed restriction. Mayor Bernstein advised that they did do that work and ensured that the previous deed restriction expired. Mr. Cwynski then spoke about an issue he had with damage done to trees on his neighbors' property. He advised that he provided information to the Shade Tree Commission that they did not consider, and he would ask his neighbor to go ahead with an appeal.

Michael Nemeth

Mr. Nemeth spoke of his neighbor's flooding issue at 80 Hardenburgh Rd. He was advised that the County was contacted to perform an inspection. Ms. Falkenstern advised Mr. Nemeth he should call her office for more details.

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

## **Closed Session Resolution 2025-005**

Potential Litigation

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Marks to adjourn to close session. It was noted that the Council may take action when returning to open session.

### **Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

The Council returned to open session at 8:45 pm.

Councilmember Fox made a motion to approve the cost of a survey for the Borough Green Acres property adjacent to Maple Ave. in Closter per proposal from Galiano dated 5/16/25. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins and Ms. Falkenstern noted that the vote is memorialized as Resolution No. 114-25.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Councilmember Collins made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council President Slowikowski and approved by all on a voice vote. The meeting was therefore adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Julie Falkenstern*  
Acting Borough Clerk