

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST  
REGULAR MEETING Minutes  
October 27, 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,

Absent: Councilmember Reiss

Also Present: Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator  
Deena Rosendahl, Borough Attorney  
Frank Visaggio, Acting Chief of Police  
John McLoughlin, Fire Chief  
John Dunlea, Special Projects Engineer

**Ordinance (Introduction):**

**ORDINANCE 1170-25** ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST ADOPTING THE AMENDED REDEVELOPMENT PLAN PRODUCED BY COLLIERS ENGINEERING ON BEHALF OF THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST

Councilmember Fox a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No.1170-25 and it be published as required by law with notice of Public Hearing to be held on November 10, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jiang.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Councilmember Reiss

**ORDINANCE 1171-25** AN ORDINANCE CREATING A LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORP MEMBERS

Councilmember Collins a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No.1171-25 and it be published as required by law with notice of Public Hearing to be held on November 10, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Councilmember Reiss

**Ordinance Public Hearing (Adoption):**

**ORDINANCE 1169-25** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 175 – ZONING TO INCREASE THE AFFORDABLE SET-ASIDE IN SECTION 175-46E.(1), AND TO CLARIFY AFFORDABLE PAYMENTS-IN-LIEU IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2025 HOUSING ELEMENT & FAIR SHARE PLAN

Mayor Bernstein announced that due to the publication date caused by the Holiday on 10/13/25, the public hearing for Ordinance 1169-25 will be held on November 10, 2025.

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**Resolution 186-25:** RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A FIVE (5) YEAR CONTRACT FOR THE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING TO INTERSTATE WASTE SERVICES OF NEW JERSEY, INC

A motion was made by Councilmember Marks and seconded by Councilmember Fox to approve Resolution 186-25.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Councilmember Reiss

Mayor Bernstein noted that the new contract is advantageous to the Borough in pricing and includes single stream recycling.

**Resolution 187-25:** RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST TO AUTHORIZE THE BOROUGH CLERK TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR THE REHABILITATION OF THE DEMAREST GAZEBO

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Council President Slowikowski to approve Resolution 187-25.

**Roll Call:**

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

Nays: None

Absent: Councilmember Reiss

Mayor Bernstein then invited John Dunlea of Neglia Engineering to make a presentation of the plans for the new gazebo. He noted that it will be ADA accessible, new gutters will be added to

improve drainage and upgraded electrical service. Councilmember Fox asked for the opening to front be as large as possible to allow viewing for wedding pictures. Councilmember Marks asked if there was lighting on the exterior of the gazebo. Mr. Dunlea talked about improved interior down lighting inside for better use at night. Councilmember Jiang asked how much grant money was received. Ms. Falkenstern confirmed that just over \$110,000.00 is funded by Bergen County Open Space.

**Resolution 196-25: RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST TO AUTHORIZE THE AWARD AND EXECUTION OF A LEASE FOR REAL PROPERTY -24 PARK ST.**

A motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Council President Slowikowski to approve Resolution 196-25.

**Roll Call:**

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

Mayor Bernstein thanked the Council for their approval and noted that he is pleased with the project is moving ahead as an addition to the downtown and a revenue source for the Borough.

**Resolution 197-25 APPOINTING EB SOLUTIONS / DIFFERENCE CARD FOR HRA SERVICES**

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Collins to approve Resolution 197-25.

Ms. Falkenstern gave a brief explanation of the service due to the late addition of the resolution on the agenda. She explained that the Borough's risk manager advised that without a creative option such as this, the Borough was at risk of a near 50% increase to the healthcare costs due the increase from State Health Benefits.

**Roll Call:**

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

**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. 188-25	Chapter 159 – Alcohol Rehab Grant
Resolution No. 189-25	Chapter 159 – Body Armor Grant
Resolution No. 190-25	Chapter 159 – Body Worn Camera Grant
Resolution No. 191-25	Chapter 159 – Municipal Alliance Grant
Resolution No. 192-25	Approving Shared Service with Borough of Haworth
Resolution No. 193-25	Release of Performance Bond
Resolution No. 194-25	Release of Escrow
Resolution No. 195-25	Payment of Bills

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

**Roll Call:**

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

**Presentation of the Master Plan by the Demarest Public Library**

Director Parinda Desai presented to the Council and public the accomplishments and programming of the Demarest Public Library over the past 5 years.

**Mayor’s Report**

Mayor Bernstein reported that he hopes the bank building will be the next issue addressed downtown. He reported that the new traffic light is just awaiting power and then will be functioning.

**Council Committee Reports**

Finance & Personnel (Slowikowski)

Council President Slowikowski reported that the committee held their first meeting concerning the 2026 budget and discussed the process and the upcoming meeting schedule. She welcomed Bobby Sherrow as the new construction official. She then thanked the Recreation Commission for their planning of the recent Halloween event that she attended.

Ordinance (Fox)

Councilmember Fox reported that the Planning Board is making recommendations for changes to the Zoning Ordinance that will be coming to the committee and then the Council in the coming months.

DPW & Recreation (Marks)

Councilmember Marks thanked the Borough DPW, Police Department, and Fire Department for their support of the Halloween event. He reported that the next recreation event is the tree lighting on December 2.

Economic Development (Jiang)

Councilmember Jiang reported that new gym is now open at the middle school and will be offering usage of the space to the community. Councilmember Jiang reported that the lease of

the train station is the most recent step in modernizing and making better use of the space downtown. He noted that more improvements are coming to the downtown in the coming months.

Police and OEM (Reiss)

Absent – No report.

Fire and EMS (Collins)

Councilmember Collins reported that he spoke to the EMS Chief and there is nothing to report. He further reported that Shade Tree Commission's project at the cemetery has been completed and the Commission has discussed concerns from some neighbors of the cemetery and decided to table the issue for now but will look at the area again in the Spring of 2026 to see if any of those concerns can be addressed. He thanked Fire Department and EMS for their feedback and Councilmember Fox, Ms. Rosendahl and Ms. Falkenstern for their work in updating the LOSAP ordinance to better serve the Borough. Mayor Bernstein asked Councilmember Collins if he could ask the Shade Tree Commission if they have any funds earmarked for upgrades at the cemetery. Additionally, he asked Councilmember Collins to remind the Commission that the Council is waiting for recommendations from them related to the trees for the Stelfox mitigation plan that appear to interfere with the overhead wires. Councilmember Collins noted that one of the reasons the Commission is tabling the issue of the cemetery partly to make sure they reserve some budget funds to handle hazard trees that need attention heading in to storm season.

### **Reports of Borough Officials**

*Borough Administrator –Annual Best Practices Survey*

Ms. Falkenstern reviewed the Annual Best Practices Survey and reported that the Borough had a score of 37 where a minimum score of 32 is required to maintain access to State Aid.

Ms. Falkenstern reminded the Council that the Borough Engineer is looking for feedback on a policy concerning curbs and sidewalk. She then reported that she met on site with the three builders of the new homes on Central Ave to address sidewalk issues along with the Construction Official, DPW Director and Borough Engineer. She advised that the issue on Central Ave is a good example of what happens when the policy is unclear and she would like direction from the Council on how they would like to handle requirements of curbs and sidewalks in new construction.

Borough Attorney

Ms. Rosendahl advised that the policies and procedures manual will be distributed to the Council before the next meeting where a resolution to approve will be considered. She noted that while there are no major changes proposed, there are policy updates as recommended by the MEL and current state law.

Borough Treasurer

Absent – No Report

Ambulance

Absent – No Report

## Police Chief

Chief Visaggio detailed the monthly activity of the department. He noted that they are continuing to hand out cards to residents when they observe unsecured property, such as an open garage door in an attempt to prevent crimes of opportunity. He reported that the Department will participate in Breast Cancer Awareness month and thus the officers will be wearing pink hats for the month. He detailed recent training in the department including Officer Nolasco now serving RDF. Lastly, he met with the new School Superintendent about placing school funded Special Law Enforcement Officers in the lower schools with the goal being 2026 school year. He thanked the DPW, FD and EMS for their continued support. And the Fire Department specifically for the use of their building to conduct defensive tactics training.

## Fire Chief

Chief McLoughlin detailed the monthly activity of the department including meetings, drills and training. He discussed the Department's participation Trunk or Treat event. Mayor Bernstein asked the Chief to discuss with Haworth whether a memorialization of a shared service would assist both departments with the future purchases of equipment.

## DPW Director

Mr. Gangi reported that leaf season has begun and that branch pickup is suspended until the end of leaf season in December. He reported that his department will be setting up the holiday decorations before Thanksgiving to ensure that everything is ready for the lighting ceremony that is scheduled for the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. Mayor Bernstein advised Mr. Gangi that he received many compliments from residents on the department operations to remove leaves.

## **Approval of Minutes:**

### October 14, 2025 Work Session 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  
Nays: None  
Absent: Councilmember Reiss

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

There being no 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 Marks and approved by all on a voice vote.

**Closed Session Resolution 2025-011**

Councilmember Fox made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-011 to conduct an executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins and approved by all on a voice vote.

The Council returned to open session and Council President Slowikowski 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 10:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Julie Falkenstein, RMC*  
Borough Clerk