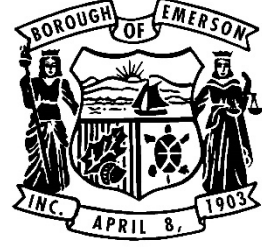


MINUTES
BOROUGH OF EMERSON
MAYOR & COUNCIL
January 20, 2025
7:30 PM
BOROUGH HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1 Municipal Place, Emerson, NJ 07630



I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor DiPaola welcomed everyone to the January 20, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Emerson Governing Body. She said the meeting was being videotaped and could be viewed from a link on the Borough website as well as Verizon Fios Channel 36 and Cablevision Channel 77. The meeting was also being live-streamed on YouTube.

This meeting of January 20, 2026 was adequately noticed and in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act on January 12, 2025 and noticed to The Record and Ridgewood News newspapers; posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and remained continuously posted as required under the Statute.

Mrs. Francesca Ianora led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor DiPaola asked for a moment of silence for Emerson resident Rose Marie Farrelly.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Danielle DiPaola, Council President Ashley Rice, Councilwoman Ashley Sayers, Councilman O'Neil Ellis, Councilwoman, Nicole Argenzia, Councilman Michael Timmerman, Councilwoman Megan Ciolino

Also Present: Borough Attorney John McCann, Borough Clerk Triessa DeSimone

III. EXCUSED ABSENCE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

All Council members were present.

IV. PROCLAMATIONS & CITATIONS

- Francesca Ianora – 105th Birthday

Francesca Ianora attended this meeting to receive her Proclamation from Mayor DiPaola. Mrs. Ianora gave a speech about her life and how grateful she is to have been an Emerson resident, involved member of the community and former educator for many decades. Mayor DiPaola read aloud the Proclamation commemorating Mrs. Ianora's 105th Birthday and declared January 23, 2026 as Francesca Ianora Day in the Borough of Emerson.

- National Blood Donor Month

Mayor DiPaola announced that all proclamations can be found on the Borough's website.

V. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor DiPaola appointed Christopher Johnson to the Library Board of Trustees for a five-year term ending on December 31, 2026.

Mayor DiPaola appointed Richard Hodgeman to the Library Board of Trustees for a five-year term ending on December 31, 2026.

No appointments were made to the Historic Preservation Committee.

VI. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

Motion to approve the December 16, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes made by Council President Rice, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis. Carried by a roll call vote of 5-0-1.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Timmerman, Sayers

ABSTAIN: Rice

Motion to approve the December 16, 2025 Closed Session Meeting Minutes (*not for release to the public at this time*) made by Councilwoman Ciolino, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis. Carried by a roll call vote of 5-0-1.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Timmerman, Sayers

ABSTAIN: Rice

Motion to approve the December 30, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes made by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis. Carried by a roll call vote of 5-0-1.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Timmerman, Sayers

ABSTAIN: Rice

Motion to approve the December 30, 2025 Special Session Meeting Minutes (*not for release to the public at this time*) made by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis. Carried by a roll call vote of 5-0-1.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Timmerman, Sayers

ABSTAIN: Rice

Motion to approve the January 6, 2026 Reorganization Meeting Minutes made by Councilman Ellis, **seconded** by Councilwoman Argenzia. Carried by a roll call vote of 6-0.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Rice, Timmerman, Sayers

Motion to approve the January 6, 2026 Reorganization Closed Meeting Minutes (*not for release to the public at this time*) made by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis. Carried by a roll call vote of 6-0.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Rice, Timmerman, Sayers

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

- January 8, 2026 Letter from Bureau of NJPDES Stormwater Permitting and Water Quality Management Re: Approval of Stormwater Assistance Grant Deliverable

Mayor DiPaola then advised that all correspondence is on file in the Clerk's office. Dave Atkinson, Borough Engineer explained that this is in regards to the MS4 Stormwater mapping system was reviewed and approved and the NJPDES will be issuing the remaining \$10,000 for the grant.

VIII. FINANCIAL BUSINESS

- **Resolution No. 59-26** Approve January 20, 2026 Bills List

Motion to approve Resolution 59-26 Approve January 20, 2026 Bills List was moved by Councilman Timmerman, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis and carried by a roll call vote of 6-0:

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Rice, Timmerman, Sayers

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS

None.

XI. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None.

XII. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES

None.

XIII. REPORTS

Councilwoman Ciolino reported:

- Land Use Board:
 - The Land Use Board next meeting is January 22nd, 7:30 pm and continue to hear the application for the Armenian Home.
- DPW:
 - The DPW is still picking up Christmas Trees, if you need yours picked up please call them at 201-262-8199.
 - DPW has been working with Energy Sales Force to install energy efficient LED lights on the exterior of Borough Hall, the Senior Center, the Recreation Center and the DPW building at no cost to the Borough through a PSE&G grant.
 - Please do not park on the street during a snow storm as it is hazardous and makes it difficult for the DPW to clear the snow.
- Health Department:

- There have been come complaints on Facebook about a chemical burning smell but Facebook complaints do not make it to Borough Hall, please call the police department to investigate any concerns you are having.
- Technology:
 - The new website went live, easy to navigate on mobile and desktop, we welcome any feedback.
- Environmental Commission
 - Galentines Foral Arrangement event with New City Florist on January 27th at 7:00 pm. Please RSVP to eec@emersonnj.gov by January 22nd.
- Fire Department:
 - In December, the Fire Department responded to 21 calls for service addressing a diverse range of emergency situations. The incidents required swift response and professional expertise from our dedicated volunteer members.
 - Our department also provided mutual aid assistance to neighboring municipalities on three occasions, demonstrating our commitment to regional emergency response cooperation.
 - Significant in incidents for the month included one vehicle fire within the Borough, a residential structure fire in Park Ridge, and one commercial structure fire in Closter. All incidents were handled professionally and efficiently through coordination of our mutual aid partners.
 - Beyond emergency response, the Department members spent considerable hours bringing Santa Claus throughout the town, continuing this beloved Emerson tradition.
 - We also concluded the month by hosting our annual holiday workshop which brought residents together in celebration for the holiday season.
 - And lastly, our volunteer members collectively contributed 415 hours of service to the Borough of Emerson during December. These hours encompass emergency response, training, equipment maintenance, mutual aid operations, and community engagement activities. Thank you for your continued support.

Councilwoman Argenzia reported:

No report.

Councilman Ellis reported:

- Shade Tree meeting is tomorrow for their reorganization meeting and the Armenian Home is also on their agenda for discussion.

Council President Rice reported:

- Recreation Commission meeting is tomorrow, January 21st at 8:00 pm.
- Board of Education meeting is on January 26th at 7:30 pm. In the High School meeting center.

Councilman Timmerman reported:

- The first Appropriate Authority meeting for 2026 just concluded. Chief Savino finished 2025 on a high note, they are fully engaged in the community and doing a great job running efficiently for the Borough.
- Looking forward to working with the Library Board of Trustees this year.

Councilwoman Savers reported:

No report.

Mayor DiPaola reported:

- Dog and Cat license applications for 2026 are due by Friday, January 30th. There is a grace period for applications received and postmarked by February 12th. Applications received thereafter will have the \$25 late fee imposed. Applications can be found on the Borough's website under the Health Department page at www.emersonnj.gov/health and were also included in the Garbage and Recycling Newsletter. Please contact Mary at 201-262-6086 ext. 1213 with any questions.
- This year's Commuter Parking Permits for parking on Emerson Plaza East are available now at police headquarters, Monday through Friday 8:30am to 7:30pm. The Resident fee is \$250.
- First quarter taxes are due February 1st with a grace period through February 10th. If you have any questions, please reach out to the tax office at 201-262-6086 extension 1211.
- No-Knock Registration Forms are available on the website and in the 2026 Garbage & Recycling Newsletter. Please note there is a \$5 fee for the decal for anyone under 65 years old. It is free for anyone 65 and older. Although it doesn't pertain to nonprofit, charitable, religious and political groups, being on this registry prohibits licensed solicitors from knocking on your door.
- The next senior meeting is on February 12th at 12 noon. New members are welcome. I encourage our seniors to join this vibrant and active group with many social events and fun activities planned.
- The senior bus is available to residents age 55 and up and to those with special needs. It runs each week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Please contact the Deputy Clerk, Samantha at 201-262-6086 x1201 to book a ride.
- On Tuesday, February 17th at 6:00PM, the Borough will be holding our 2nd "Welcome Ramadan Crescent Moon Lighting Ceremony". Please join us, along with our Muslim residents, on the front lawn of Borough Hall to mark the start of Ramadan as a community. All are invited. Light refreshments will be served. A flyer will be posted in the next few days.
- The first Bergen County Utilities Authority Household Hazardous Waste Collection of 2026 will be held on Saturday, March 7th from 9am to 3pm, rain or shine, in Moonachie. Please visit www.bcu.org for all the details.
- Mark Your Calendars and Get Your Unwanted Paper Documents Ready! We will be having a mobile shredding day in collaboration with the BCUA on Saturday May 16th from 9 AM to 1 PM at Borough Hall.
- I encourage our residents to sign up to receive emergency notifications and other Borough information through our RAVE Alert System at www.emersonnj.gov/RAVE. And, as always, more information on all of our events and current news is posted on the borough website at www.emersonnj.gov/news or our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.
- Groundhog Day is Monday, February 2nd. I know we are all hoping Punxsutawney Phil does not see his shadow and we have an early spring!
- Friday, February 7th is National Wear Red Day to help raise awareness for cardiovascular disease.

- The next regular meeting of the Governing Body will take place on Tuesday, February 3rd at 7:30 PM.

Borough Engineer, Dave Atkinson reported:

- **CDBG Grant for Senior Center Doors:** After two unsuccessful times of publicly bidding the project, we were able to negotiate bids in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law on behalf of the borough. During the negotiation process we received four negotiated bids which In-Line Architectural Glass & Metal, Inc. submitting the lowest total bid (Base and Alternate Bid) in the amount of \$92,500. Award of this project is on the consent agenda for this evening. We will work to get the contracts put in place and move this project along with the contractor and Bergen County CDBG Office.
- **Vivian-Dorchester Area Drainage Study:** The data collection process has been completed and we are in the process of building the necessary storm models to analyze the existing system and then look at potential remedies to alleviate some of the flooding issues.
- **MS4 Stormwater Infrastructure Mapping:** The infrastructure mapping was submitted to the state and the borough received formal approval of the mapping. The remaining \$10,000 of the total \$25,000 grant funds shall be submitted to the borough to help offset the costs for the work.
- **MS4 Watershed Inventory Report Phase 1:** The report was submitted to the state as required by the December 31, 2025 deadline. The state acknowledged receipt of the report and will be reviewing them in short order and provide any feedback.

Borough Attorney, John McCann, Esq. reported:

No report.

Triessa DeSimone, RMC, Borough Clerk reported:

The Borough's new website design went live today. This was strictly an esthetic upgrade to offer a more user-friendly experience with a modern design. All of the same content is still on the website as it was before. Nothing has been removed and only a few items have been slightly shifted to accommodate the new design. There was no cost to the Borough for this upgrade as it was already part of our agreement with our website host, Catalis.

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion to open the meeting to comments from the public was **moved** by Councilman Timmerman, **seconded** by Councilwoman Argenzia and carried unanimously.

With no one from the public coming forward, **Motion** to close the meeting to comments from the public was **moved** by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis and carried unanimously.

XV. RESOLUTIONS ON CONSENT AGENDA

Matters listed below are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion of the Council and one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests an item be removed for consideration.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| CA 60-26 | Approve Final Change Order for FY 2024 Road Program |
| CA 61-26 | Approve Close of Contract & Final Payment for FY 2024 Road Program |

- CA 62-26** Adoption of Form Required for Notices of Tort Claims
CA 63-26 Authorize Permanent Appointment of Samantha Chvasta, Deputy Clerk/Administrative Assistant Effective January 15, 2026
CA 64-26 Authorize Drug and Alcohol Testing Agreement for CY 2026
CA 65-26 Amend Resolution 15-26: Approve Appointment of LOSAP Administrators
CA 66-26 Amend Resolution 37-26: Designate Official Newspapers to include P.L. 2025 c. 72
CA 67-26 Approve Transfer of Funds
CA 68-26 Confirmation of 2026 Election Results of the Emerson Volunteer Fire Department Firematic Officers Election
CA 69-26 Approve Shared Services Agreement for Borough Administrator Services
CA 70-26 Authorize Attorney Fees to be Paid on Behalf of Mayor
CA 71-26 Award Contract to In-Line Architectural Glass & Metal Inc. for the Emerson Senior Center ADA Doors Project Improvements (CDBG)

Motion to approve Consent Agenda Resolutions **No. 60-26** through **No. 71-26** was **moved** by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilwoman Ciolino and carried by a roll call vote of 6-0:

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Rice, Timmerman, Sayers

XVI. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to enter closed executive session at 8:12 pm to discuss matters exempt from the public as duly noticed by Resolution **No. 72-26** was **moved** by Councilwoman Sayers, **seconded** by Councilwoman Argenzia and carried by a roll call vote of 6-0:

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Ellis, Rice, Timmerman, Sayers

Personnel	N.J.S.A. 10.4-12b (8)
Contract Negotiations	N.J.S.A. 10.4-12b (4)
Litigation/Redevelopment Update/Attorney-Client Privilege	N.J.S.A. 10.4-12b (7)

The Borough reserves the right to return to Open Session and, if appropriate, take formal action.

XVII. RECONVENE

Motion to reconvene was **moved** by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis and **carried** unanimously at 8:38 p.m.

Motion to hire Tom Dellane, Esq as Special Counsel in an amount not to exceed \$7,500 was **moved** by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilwoman Sayers and carried by a roll call vote of 5-0-1.

Roll call:

YES: Ciolino, Argenzia, Rice, Timmerman, Sayers

ABSTAIN: Ellis

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, at the request of Mayor DiPaola a motion to adjourn was **moved** by Councilwoman Argenzia **seconded** by Councilwoman Ciolino and carried unanimously at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Triessa DeSimone, RMC
Borough Clerk