



MINUTES  
BOROUGH OF EMERSON  
MAYOR & COUNCIL  
March 3, 2026  
7:30 PM  
BOROUGH HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1 Municipal Place, Emerson, NJ 07630



**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor DiPaola welcomed everyone to the March 3, 2026 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. The meeting was also being live-streamed on YouTube.

This meeting of March 3, 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.

Gabrielle Micucci and John Piccirillo led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor DiPaola asked for a moment of silence for Emerson resident, Mr. Herbert Fink.

**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 (arrived 8:21pm), Borough Administrator Michael Carelli, Borough Clerk Triessa DeSimone

**III. EXCUSED ABSENCE OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

All Council members were present.

**IV. PROCLAMATIONS & CITATIONS**

- Certificate of Commendation for Achievements in High School Basketball:
  - Gabrielle Micucci for scoring 1,000 points in Girls Varsity Basketball.
  - John Piccirillo for scoring 1,000 points in Boys Varsity Basketball.

Mayor DiPaola invited Gabrielle Micucci and John Piccirillo to the front of Council Chambers and presented them with Certificates of Accommodation for scoring 1,000 points each for their respective Emerson Jr/Sr High School Varsity Basketball Teams. Ms. Micucci and Mr.

Piccirillo also signed basketballs which will be given to the Emerson Historic Committee to inspire future young athletes.



- Proclamation for Women's History Month

Mayor DiPaola announced that March is Women's History Month. All proclamations are on the Borough's website.

## V. APPOINTMENTS

Mayor DiPaola appointed Alan Bernstein to the Historic Preservation Committee as a Class B Member for a four-year term expiring December 31, 2029.

## VI. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

**Motion** to approve the February 17, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes made by Councilwoman Sayers, **seconded** by Council President Rice. Carried by a roll call vote of 6-0

**Roll call:**

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

**Motion** to approve the February 17, 2026 Closed Session Meeting Minutes (*not for release to the public at this time*) made by Councilman Timmerman, **seconded** by Councilwoman Ciolino. Carried by a roll call vote of 6-0

**Roll call:**

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

## VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor DiPaola announced that all correspondence is available in the Borough Clerk's office.

- Public Notice from Borough of Westwood re: New LM-RM Multifamily Affordable Housing Overlay Zone Ordinance
- Public Notice from Borough of Harrington Park re: Planning Board Notice on Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
- Public Notice from Township of Washington re: Notice of Hearing for Revision and Adoption of 2025 Housing Element

## VIII. FINANCIAL BUSINESS

Fire Department: Fire Chief Joseph Mara presented the department's capital budget requests to the Governing Body.

Chief Mara started by thanking the Governing Body for providing the Fire Department with a lot of new equipment. The Fire Department is a tough entity to keep going because of the constant changes in guidelines for training and equipment. Last year the Council approved the purchase of a new Fire Truck and all the equipment that goes with it. This year the budget requests are on the smaller side, although still expensive.

Chief Mara requested 20-25 trunk pagers for each member of the Fire Department. The pagers are what alert the members to a fire call. Since moving to the County for dispatch, these pagers will allow for wider range for communication throughout the County. Currently, the pagers are



limited to local area. The cost for each pager is about \$1,000. Currently the department has 16 and they are functional but there are 34 members of the department which leaves a disparity.

The second request is an additional \$15,000 for personal protective equipment. This will cover about two and a half sets of gear. Gear should be replaced every 10 years.

Council President Rice asked if there is any equipment trade-in program. Chief Mara replied there is no such program but older gear is used for new members in fire school and also as backup when the current gear is temporarily out of commission while it is being cleaned.

Council President Rice asked what is the definition of equipment as it relates to the Fire Department. Chief Mara replied equipment can be anything from batteries or tools needed to perform the job safely.

Mr. Carelli added that Chief Mara has also requested some grant funding to supplement the capital request for \$15,000 for the trunk radios. The resolution to apply for this grant is on Consent Agenda tonight.

Mayor DiPaola thanked Chief Mara for presenting his budget requests to the Governing Body.

Department of Public Works: Superintendent Perry Solimando presented the department's capital budget requests to the Governing Body.

Mr. Solimando began by stating the DPW operating budget will remain the same. For the capital budget, he is requesting a closed landscape trailer, a new salt bin for \$225,000 which should bring us up to the \$500,000 that the original architect said the project would cost. A second architect took a look at the structure and determined that it does need to be repaired or replaced immediately but he has not provided a cost estimate yet.

Mr. Carelli stated that there are different solutions being proposed such as replacing part of the building, repairing some parts or replacing the entire structure. Mr. Solimando explained in detail some of the parts of the building that need repair.

Mr. Solimando stated that he would like to put the \$37,000 for the fuel tank and piping system on hold as he is looking into a grant that could fund this project. The DEP and OSHA suggested moving the fuel tank piping from under to above ground. Since the piping is currently underground it requires a yearly inspection and bringing it above ground would also limit the Borough's liability.

Mr. Solimando is requesting \$20,000 for Buildings and Grounds for sidewalk safety and handicap ramp improvements at Borough Hall. Mayor DiPaola asked about the current issues with the ramp to which Mr. Solimando replied the railing on the ramp is rotted out, it has been repaired but needs to be replaced at this point. Mr. Solimando has been looking into grants to cover the cost of the ramp but most grants seems to cover the cost of new ramps and not repairing already existing ones.

Mr. Solimando continued to his last request for \$100,000 to cover the cost of a new roof at the DPW garage. After the most recent storm, the roof began to leak into the garage. They patched



the leak but within days more water came into the garage again. Mr. Solimando presented the Governing Body with photos of the garage and ceiling where the water came in.

Mayor DiPaola thanked Mr. Solimando for presenting his budget requests to the Governing Body.

Police Department: Chief of Police, Mark Savino presented the Governing Body with his capital budget requests.

Chief Savino requested to purchase a drone in the amount of \$14,623 for the police department. Chief Savino said drones have increased in use for policing, they are used for many reasons such as to investigate crime scenes, looking for missing people, and looking for criminals. The drone itself costs about \$10,000 and the remaining funds would be put toward licensing. The police department has borrowed a drone from another town which was of great assistance to watch situations in real time such as assisting the fire department or watching over large town-wide events.

Mayor DiPaola asked about the regulations for using the drone. Chief Savino replied that the FAA and Attorney General has regulations and policy in place to make sure that the department is compliant with the law.

Councilman Ellis asked if there is any upkeep or maintenance costs associated with the drone. Chief Savino replied that it would be minimal and covered by a warranty.

Councilman Timmerman asked if the officers need to be licensed to use it. Chief Savino replied, yes and there is a minimal cost which would come out of the ancillary. Chief Savino would like to get at least one officer on each squad trained and licensed to operate the drone.

Mayor DiPaola asked if there is a regulation on how long to keep the footage and if that would also fall under the Attorney General's regulations and if we have the bandwidth to store the files. Chief Savino concurred that there are regulations and enough file storage space.

Council President Rice asked if they can be used to give parking tickets. Chief Savino replied, they wouldn't use it for that purpose.

The final request from the police department is for the purchase of a Ford Maverick pickup truck. Traffic detail brings in a lot of revenue for the town and it would be used for traffic detail and events to be able to move large items if needed. The cost is \$33,976 which would pay for itself compared to the amount of revenue it brings in for the year.

The rest of the operating budget is fairly flat except for a slight increase in the overtime budget. As the department assists neighboring towns with traffic and security details and with the World Cup this fall and the US Navy ships that will be coming through the New York Area this summer there are a lot of potential for overtime costs.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Mayor DiPaola thanked Chief Savino for presenting his budget requests to the Governing Body.



Borough Clerk Department: Borough Clerk, Triessa DeSimone presented her department's capital budget request to the Governing Body.

Ms. DeSimone requested \$30,000 for the Clerk's Office for scanning and digitizing records. The Clerk's office has a lot of long-term and permanent retention records that we would like to digitize. We would use an outside vendor to do this work for us. Once the documents are scanned they are cataloged in an online portal so we can access everything on our computers.

Councilman Ellis asked if we have received a cost estimate for this project. Ms. DeSimone replied that one estimate came in at \$44,000 to scan 150 boxes of records but since this is a long-term project that will be done in phases, she felt that \$30,000 would be a more realistic goal to start with.

Mayor DiPaola added that we have a whole conference room on the lower level of Borough Hall that we are unable to use because it has become a storage room for records.

Mayor DiPaola thanked Ms. DeSimone for presenting her request to the Governing Body.

John McCann arrived at the meeting at 8:21 PM.

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**XI. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**

None.

**XII. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES**

None.

**XIII. REPORTS**

**Mayor DiPaola's reported:**

- Emerson Junior/Senior High School is presenting "Godspell" March 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM, and March 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM. To purchase tickets, please call 201-599-4178 ext. 5358.
- Applications for the Community Garden are now being accepted by the Environmental Commission through April 1<sup>st</sup>. All plots will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis and are strictly limited to Emerson residents. A donation of \$20.00 along with the completed application can be dropped off at the Clerk's Office. Applications are available on the Borough website and in the Clerk's Office.



APPROVED FOR RELEASE 4-7-2026

- The Philip Morgan Blood Drive is being held at the Senior Center on April 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. To schedule a donation appointment, please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: "PhilipMorgan" to schedule an appointment.
- The next senior meeting is Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon. New members are always welcome. If you are 55 or over and are interested in learning more about our Senior Club you can visit [www.emersonnj.gov/seniors](http://www.emersonnj.gov/seniors) or attend their next meeting to see what it's all about. They offer fun events, day trips and plenty of social activities on a regular basis.
- The Borough will be recognizing Black Balloon Day on March 6<sup>th</sup>, to remember those who have passed due to overdose.
- The senior bus is available to residents age 55 and up and to those with special needs. It runs each week on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Please call Samantha at 201-262-6086 x1201 to book a ride.
- The Bergen County Utilities Authority Household Hazardous Waste Collection of 2026 will be held Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 3pm, rain or shine, in Moonachie. Please visit [www.bcuu.org](http://www.bcuu.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 16<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 1 PM at Borough Hall.
- This year's Arbor Day Ceremony will be on April 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. The Borough, through the Shade Tree Commission, will once again plant a tree in memory of Emerson residents who have passed away since January of 2025. If you would like your loved one to be remembered at this year's Arbor Day ceremony, please contact the Borough Clerk's Office at (201) 262- 6086 Option 9 or by email at [deputyclerk@emersonnj.gov](mailto:deputyclerk@emersonnj.gov).
- Congressman Gottheimer will be holding "Mobile Business Hours" for Constituent Services on May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 PM, at Emerson Borough Hall. This will be before the first Mayor and Council Meeting of May 2026, that same evening at 7:30 PM. No appointment is necessary.
- The State of New Jersey has announced the 2025 property tax relief programs for eligible New Jerseyans. There is a single streamlined application to apply for the Senior Freeze, ANCHOR, and Stay NJ programs. The deadline to file is November 2, 2026. Please call Lauren at 201-262-6086 extension 1211 in the Tax Office for further information.
- 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](http://www.emersonnj.gov/RAVE). And, as



always, all of our events and current news are posted on the borough website at [www.emersonnj.gov/news](http://www.emersonnj.gov/news) and our social media pages.

- The Military Banner program is open for 2026. The Borough has made this program available to our residents who wish to honor their family members who currently live or have resided in Emerson in the past. The banners are displayed from Memorial Day through Veterans Day are then stored by the DPW during the winter months. They are rehung every year as long as they are in good shape. We look forward to displaying many more this year. This is our way of saying “Thank You” to the men and woman of our great United States Military. The sponsorship rate is \$200 per banner and is tax deductible. Please place your order by April 30th in order to have them displayed by Memorial Day.
- The next regular meeting of the Governing Body will take place on Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM. Please note this is outside of the regular schedule of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. The date, again, is Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.

**Borough Administrator reported:**

- The West End Drainage Improvements Project is funded by the NJ Department of Community Affairs Grant and must be closed out by September 1, 2026. I am working with the Borough Engineer to finalize the project design and prepare the bid specs. We are also seeking additional funding through the federal earmark process for additional components and phases for this project. We hope to have further updates and information soon.
- Thanks to the Borough Clerk for keeping the website compliant in response to the new public notice legislation in NJ which as of March 1, 2026 changed and now all legal notices must be published on the Borough’s website in lieu of the legal newspaper of the Borough. The website also meets the ADA compliance regulations.
- Meeting with Perry from DPW regarding 2026 Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Grant Application to discuss the Ackerman Park Improvement Park. The vendor did submit a cost estimate for the 2024-2025 grants and the items that have already been funded are the playground, playground surface and the water feature. The new grant cannot supplement the previous items but we also discussed the addition of a small pavilion with picnic tables on a concrete slab. This could cost somewhere between \$150,000-\$250,000. The letter of intent is due March 29, 2026. We should have an update at the next council meeting.
- We have some renewals for Shared Services coming up with the Emerson Board of Education for the provision of the Special Resource Officers and the Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers. These are two separate agreements and I am working on these with the CFO for negotiation with the Board of Education.
- Thank you to the department heads and the CFO for all your work on this year’s budget.

**XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Motion** to open the meeting to comments from the public was **moved** by Councilman Ellis



Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilwoman Argenzia and carried unanimously.

With no requests from the public, **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.

- 92-26:** Confirm Permanent Appointment of Louis Sedlmeir as Laborer for the Department of Public Works
- 93-26:** Approve Temporary Emergency Budget
- 94-26:** Authorizing Sale of Surplus Property at GOVDEALS.COM Auction- One (1) Savin Copy Machine
- 95-26:** Approve Refund of Tax Overpayments
- 96-26:** Authorize Grant Submittal to FY 2026 AARP Community Challenge Grants Program for the Purchase of Radios for the Borough of Emerson Volunteer Fire Department
- 97-26:** Authorize Grant Submittal for FY 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Program for the West End Drainage Improvements Project
- 98-26:** Endorse PY 2026-2027 Bergen County Community Development Block Grant Application for Reconstruction of Senior Center Kitchen for Commercial Improvements
- 99-26:** Authorize Grant Submittal for FY 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending Program for the Borough of Emerson Volunteer Fire Department Installation Project

**Motion** to approve Consent Agenda Resolutions **No. 92-26** through **99-26** was **moved** by Councilwoman Argenzia, **seconded** by Councilwoman Sayers. 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 8:34 pm to discuss matters exempt from the public as duly noticed by Resolution **No. 100-26** 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



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 10:26 p.m.

**Motion** to authorize John A. Conte, Jr., Esq to finalize the settlement with the Armenian Home Foundation for the back-tax appeal case was **moved** by Councilman Timmerman, **seconded** by Councilman Ellis. Carried by a roll call vote of 5-0-1:

**Roll call:**

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

**ABSTAIN:** Argenzia

#### **XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, at the request of Mayor DiPaola a motion to adjourn was **moved** by Councilwoman Ciolino **seconded** by Councilman Ellis and carried unanimously at 10:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Triessa DeSimone, RMC  
Borough Clerk

