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March 22, 2024

A Guide to Attending Meetings of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Garwood

Meetings are generally held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Hall, located at 403 South Avenue. Please refer to the calendar posted on the Borough website ([link](#)) for all current meeting dates and to confirm all meeting dates. Special meetings may be held on any date with forty-eight (48) hours public notice. The public should enter Borough Hall through the Center Street (Police Department) entrance and proceed directly down the hallway to the Council Chamber / Courtroom after security screening.

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN PERSON, BROADCAST LIVE ON YOUTUBE AND MAY ALSO BE VIEWED ON DEMAND

Meetings of the Mayor and Council are normally held in person, however meetings *may* be held fully virtually when necessary. Meetings are broadcast live on YouTube on the Garwood Borough Government account ([link](#)). Recordings of prior meetings may be viewed on demand at any time via YouTube. Please note, the public can not interact or comment virtually. Virtual only meetings will be announced in advance. Details for accessing a meeting virtually or by phone via Zoom will be posted on the Borough website ([link](#)).

GARWOOD OPERATES UNDER THE “BOROUGH FORM” OF GOVERNMENT

The “Borough Form” of local government provides for a Mayor and six (6) Members of Council. The Mayor and Council Members, each elected at-large in the Borough, constitute the governing body of the Borough of Garwood and are referred to as the “Governing Body” or “Mayor and Council.” The 6-member Borough Council is the legislative body of municipal government. The Council is responsible for enacting local ordinances and, through the passage of resolutions, adopts the municipal budget, awards contracts for public works, approves appointments made by the Mayor, and makes appointments as provided by law. The Mayor presides at Borough Council meetings and has no vote except in the case of a tie. The Mayor may veto legislation adopted by the Council, but the Council may override the veto by a two-thirds vote. A quorum of the full membership of the Governing Body must be present for the Governing Body to officially meet and conduct municipal business.

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MEETING AGENDAS

Meeting agendas are posted on the Borough website under the Governing Body tab ([link](#)), generally at least one day prior to the meeting, or may be picked up on the day of a meeting at Borough Hall. There are opportunities for the public to comment during the meeting as noted on the Order of Business found on the following page.

RULES OF ORDER

Meetings of the Mayor and Council are governed by “Robert's Rules of Order” ([link](#)), except when the same are in conflict with the Laws of the State of New Jersey, ordinances of the Borough, or the by-laws of the Mayor and Council; in which event they shall be inapplicable and the relevant law, ordinance, or by-law shall govern.

COMMITTEES

The Mayor appoints all Members and Chairs of Council Committees. There are six Standing Committees of the Council, consisting of three Council Members each, who are appointed at the annual reorganization meeting of the Mayor and Council in January. The current Standing Committees of the Council are:

- Finance and Personnel
- Fire and Emergency Management
- Public Works
- Police/Public Health & Safety
- Community Engagement
- Community Development

Standing Committees are appointed to facilitate the work of the Governing Body and to provide oversight of their designated areas of municipal functions, but only within statutory limits as the entire Council is held responsible for all acts performed within the scope of its lawful authority.

The Mayor may also appoint Council Members to Special Committees and/or to serve liaisons to other departments, volunteer committees (such as the Green Team) or other elected bodies (such as the Board of Education). Committee Chairs and liaisons will report activities or projects of their respective assignments during the regular order of business.

Committee and Chair assignments may be changed by the Mayor when it is in the best interest of the Borough to do so.

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REGULAR MEETING ORDER OF BUSINESS

- I. Call to Order
The Mayor (or Council President in their absence) will call the meeting to order.
- II. Moment of Silence / Salute to the Flag
- III. Statement of Adequate Notice
This statement is required by the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A 10:4-6) and advises that the public has been given adequate notice to attend and observe the proceedings.
- IV. Roll Call of Elected Officials
Four members of the Governing Body constitute a quorum for official business.
- V. Roll Call of Staff and Professionals
The Borough Administrator, Municipal Clerk and Borough Attorney (or their designees) are present for all regular meetings of the governing body. Department Heads, other employees and professionals such as the Chief Financial Officer, Auditor and Borough Engineer may also attend meetings when needed or directed.
- VI. Proclamations and Commendations (if requested)
- VII. Report(s) of Professionals
- VIII. Report of the Borough Administrator
- IX. Report of the Mayor
- X. Comments/Discussion from Council
Members of the Council may make general comments here and/or engage in discussion of agenda items, communications or items being worked on in committee.
- XI. Adoption of Minutes
- XII. Communications
The Borough Clerk will read any official communications received into the record. Copies of the communications are linked on each Meeting Agenda.
- XIII. Ordinances
Ordinances may be up for Introduction (first reading), or Adoption (second reading / public hearing). An ordinance is a local law adopted by the Council which may cover a wide range of topics, including traffic and parking laws on Borough roads and streets, land use regulations, and tree protection and preservation among other things. Ordinances require a public hearing, which is advertised in the designated newspapers and published in advance of the scheduled meeting to inform the public and any interested party. The Mayor will open the public hearing for the pending ordinance. To ensure that every citizen is treated courteously and has an opportunity to

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Speak, the Mayor will recognize the individual and ask them to come forward to the microphone (or be taken off mute if attending virtually) and to limit their comments to five minutes. Before making a comment, the person will state their name and address for the record. At the close of the public hearing, the Council can take further action on the ordinance. If an ordinance is adopted, it is signed into law by the Mayor and attested to by the Borough Clerk.

XIV. Council Standing Committee Reports and Other Reports

Members of the Council will give reports on the six permanent standing committees of the Governing Body along with other Committee reports and Council Liaison reports.

XV. Officer's Reports

XVI. Public Comment

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on any matter or concern and public comments are always welcomed. To ensure that every citizen is treated courteously and has an opportunity to speak, the Mayor will recognize the individual and ask them to come forward to the microphone (or be taken off mute if attending virtually) and to limit their comments to five minutes. Before making a comment, the person will state their name and address for the record. Please note that Public Comments do not follow a question and answer format; however, a member of the Governing Body or Professional Staff may offer a brief response when it is helpful to do so.

XVII. Unfinished Business (Consent Agenda)

Consent agenda items are considered to be routine and will be enacted with a single motion; any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of funds; any item requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda; all Consent Agenda items will be reflected in the full minutes. Members of the Council may request resolutions be deleted from the Consent Agenda for discussion and a separate roll call vote or for the Clerk to read the entire resolution into the record.

XVIII. Resolutions Deleted from the Consent Agenda

XIX. New Business

XX. Payment of Claims

This is a routine action by the Council required to pay all properly signed and verified claims along with the payment of payrolls.

XXI. Executive Session (if needed)

The governing body may enter into an Executive or Closed Session at times. This is normally done near the end of a meeting, however an Executive or Closed Session may be done at any time during a meeting. The public will be informed if any further action is to be taken at the conclusion of the Closed Session upon return to the regular order of business.

XXII. Adjournment

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PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

- The public has an opportunity to comment on any matter of concern and public comments are always welcomed. Additionally, the public may comment on any Ordinance up for adoption (second reading) during the comment portion of the public hearing. Specific to public hearings for Ordinances, members of the Council also have an opportunity for discussion after there is a seconded motion to adopt an Ordinance.
- Members of the public may comment *when the presiding officer of the Governing Body* (normally the Mayor, or Council President in their absence, and hereafter referred to as the Mayor) *has opened a public comment period and the member of the public has been recognized*. The public may also email comments to the Borough Clerk no later than 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting at clerk@garwood.org, including a specific request to be read into the record of the meeting (otherwise they will be included on a following meeting agenda under the “Communications” section after distribution by the Clerk to all Governing Body members).
- To be *recognized*, members of the public present and wishing to speak may either stand, or raise their hand to get the attention of the Mayor. The Mayor will recognize each person wishing to comment, one at a time, taking in person comments first.
- **After *recognition*, the member of the public will approach the microphone, then state their name and address for the official record of the meeting. All comments must be directed to the Mayor and Council as a whole, not to staff or other members of the public who are present. Additionally, comments during the Public Hearing for an Ordinance must apply specifically to that Ordinance.**
- Members of the public who have already spoken may, at the discretion of the Mayor, be provided a second opportunity to comment, **provided** all other members of the public wishing to speak have done so **and** the member requesting recognition for a second time did not previously utilize the full five minutes. A member speaking for the second time will be provided with the balance of whatever time was not previously used.
- The Mayor will preserve order and decorum. The Mayor shall rule out of order, and may cause the removal of, anyone who interrupts the orderly proceeding of the meeting. The Mayor will decide on all questions of order without debate, but may call upon the Council for their opinion on any question of order.
- Please note that public comment periods do not follow a question and answer format; however, a member of the Governing Body or the professional staff may offer a brief response, when it is helpful to do so, after the comment period has been closed by a seconded motion. Responses may also be emailed by staff or a member of the Governing Body.