

**Borough of Garwood**  
**REORGANIZATION MEETING**  
**OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**  
**January 2, 2019**

Start Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Please stand for a Moment of Silence.....  
Salute to the Flag.....

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Westfield Leader, advertised on December 20, 2018, and notification was sent to the Star Ledger and prominently posted on the municipal public bulletin board and filed in the office of the municipal clerk informing the Public of the time and place according to the Provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

This meeting was called pursuant to the State Statutes for the purpose of organizing the Governing Body for the year 2019, to make appointments and to transact any business pertinent thereto.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Councilwoman Blumenstock P**  
**Councilman Lazarow P**  
**Councilman McCormack P**

***Municipal Clerk announced:***

The first order of business is to administer the oath of office to:  
Mayor Elect Sara Todisco – for a four year term  
Councilman Elect Sean Benoit – for a three-year term  
Councilman Elect Michael Ince – for a three-year term

Municipal Clerk requested that Mayor Elect Todisco be escorted to the rostrum.

***Municipal Clerk Ariemma read the following statement prior to swearing in Mayor-Elect Todisco:***

Happy New Year and Welcome to the Reorganization meeting of the Borough of Garwood for 2019. This evening Garwood is privileged to have in attendance the First Lady of the State of New Jersey, Tammy Snyder Murphy and the Honorable Joanne Rajoppi, Clerk of the County of Union. Welcome Ladies and thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to be with us this evening. Let me also take a moment to welcome the members of the Governing Body, Legislators, family, friends and the great Citizens of our awesome borough. In accordance with law, every four years the Municipal Clerk presides over the reorganization meeting until the Mayor is sworn in. Tonight I will swear in my fifth and final Mayor in my tenure as the Municipal Clerk for the Borough of Garwood. The mayors I've served under were all special to me in one way or another, however this evening I need to share with you the extraordinary relationship I have with Sara Todisco and how extremely honored and proud I am to be swearing in this amazing woman as Mayor.

I first met Sara when she was about 5 or 6 years old as her Brownie Girl Scout Leader. She walked into the meeting, eager and ready to learn and follow the Girl Scout Promise. She politely introduced herself to my co-leader Adele Lewis and me, followed by "I'm going to be the first woman president". She planted her first seed in my heart that moment, her sincerity and determination was precious. As I watched Sara and the rest of her classmates grow and go off to college I always knew she'd be magnificent in her career choice and it didn't surprise me at all that she chose teaching. Shortly after her return from college she became involved with Garwood government. I was not surprised in the least when I recalled what that little girl had said to me so many years ago. So tonight while I may not be swearing in the first woman President, although watch out Washington, I am swearing in a woman that I am truly confident will lead this borough into the future, bridge divisions, and work super hard as your Mayor. I can say with assurance that your Grandfather, Frank Todisco is beaming with pride at your accomplishments as are your parents, grandparents and many people in this room tonight.

As mentioned this event happens every four years and Sara you are the last Mayor I will swear in. I don't believe anyone can say this was all just chance. This strong leader is intelligent, caring and she is also my friend, my student, and my teacher. She will lead with firmness and compassion and her first obligation will always be to the people of Garwood. Sara, I will serve you with every ounce of my being, as I've served all my mayors, but your strength, honesty and devotion have watered that seed in my heart. It is really special for me to say that I love and admire you. I extend the best of luck to you and your administration and look forward to these last years with you as our Mayor.

The Oath of Office was administered by Ms. Ariemma. Mayor Todisco's family held the bible. Mayor Todisco took her seat on the dais.

Mayor Todisco requested that Councilman Elect Benoit be escorted to the rostrum.

The Oath of Office was administered by County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi. Councilman Benoit's family held the bible. Councilman Benoit took his seat on the dais.

Mayor Todisco requested that Councilman Elect Ince be escorted to the rostrum.

The Oath of Office was administered by County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi. Councilman Ince's family held the bible. Councilman Ince took his seat on the dais.

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>Mayor Todisco</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman Ince</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Benoit</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman Lazarow</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilwoman Blumenstock</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman McCormack</b>	<b>AYE</b>

County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi presented Mayor Todisco and Councilmen Benoit and Ince with certificates.

At this time Mayor Todisco announced anyone in the audience wishing to make a presentation, may do so now. Several presentations were made.

Mayor Todisco asked the Borough Council to nominate and elect a Council President. Councilwoman Blumenstock nominated Councilman Lazarow, seconded by Councilman Benoit.

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>Councilman Benoit</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman Lazarow</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilwoman Blumenstock</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman McCormack</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Ince</b>	<b>AYE</b>		

**CONSENT AGENDA PART A**

(Adoption upon Roll Call)

**Mayor Todisco read each nomination which was followed by roll call vote**

"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."

- 19-001 Awarding professional services for Municipal Attorney to Thomas C. Jardim of Jardim, Meisner & Susser, PC
- 19-002 Awarding professional services for Municipal Tax Appeal Attorney to Robert F. Renaud, Esq., of Palumbo Renaud & DeAppolonio, LLC
- 19-003 Awarding professional services for Municipal Labor Attorney to Matthew J. Giacobbe, Esq., of Cleary.Giacobbe.Alfieri.Jacobs, LLC
- 19-004 Awarding professional services for Municipal Prosecutor to Steven H. Merman, Esq.
- 19-005 Awarding professional services for Municipal Public Defender to Michael S. Simitz, Esq.
- 19-006 Appointing Michael Disko as Municipal Engineer for a 3 Year Term 01/01/2019-12/31/2021
- 19-007 Awarding professional services for Municipal Engineering to Michael Disko of M. Disko Associates Consulting Engineering
- 19-008 Awarding professional services for Auditing/Consulting services to Suplee, Clooney & Company
- 19-009 Appointing Councilman Rich McCormack as Planning Board Liaison, Class III for 2019

A motion to adopt Consent Agenda Part A was made by Councilwoman Blumenstock and seconded by Councilman Lazarow.

Roll Call:

<b>Councilman Benoit</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman Lazarow</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilwoman Blumenstock</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman McCormack</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Ince</b>	<b>AYE</b>		

**CONSENT AGENDA PART B**

(Adoption upon Roll Call)

"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."

- 19-010 Adopting By-Laws for 2019
- 19-011 Council Meeting Schedule for 2019
- 19-012 Official Newspapers for 2019
- 19-013 Depositories for all Funds
- 19-014 Depositories for Developers Escrow Account for 2019
- 19-015 Depositories for 2019 Municipal Court Funds
- 19-016 Depository for Savings & Investment Accounts for 2019
- 19-017 Authorizing mileage reimbursement for attendance at meetings
- 19-018 Authorizing the tax collector to conduct a tax sale
- 19-019 Interest charges on delinquent taxes and assessments
- 19-020 Delinquent tax rate for 2019
- 19-021 Rate for duplicate tax sale certificates
- 19-022 Authorizing cancellation of tax refunds less than \$10.00
- 19-023 Authorizing ADP Payroll Services as payroll service
- 19-024 Appointing Bond Counsel Steven L. Rogut, Esq.
- 19-025 Appointing Linwood Navarro as DPW Foreman
- 19-026 Appointing Sandra Bruns as Tax Search Officer
- 19-027 Appointing Christina Ariemma as Assessment Search Officer
- 19-028 Appointing Christina Ariemma as Public Agency Compliance
- 19-029 Appointing Kathleen J. Wierzbinski as Clean Communities Coordinator
- 19-030 Appointing Allan Tweedle as Fire Chief
- 19-031 Appointing John Scalzadonna as Assistant Fire Chief
- 19-032 Appointing Leonard Spina as Superintendent of Fire Apparatus
- 19-033 Appointing Leonard Spina as Fire Official
- 19-034 Appointing Special Police Officers "Class B" School Crossing Guards
- 19-035 Appointing Special Police Officers "Class B" Alternate School Crossing Guards
- 19-036 Appointing Special Police Officers "Class C" Matrons for 2019
- 19-037 Adopting the 2019 Temporary Budget

A motion to adopt Consent Agenda Part B was made by Councilman Lazarow and seconded by Councilwoman Blumenstock.

Roll Call:

<b>Councilman Benoit</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman Lazarow</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilwoman Blumenstock</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>Councilman McCormack</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Ince</b>	<b>AYE</b>		

The following are Mayors Appointments, no CONFIRMATION required:

**PLANNING BOARD**

TITLE	NAME	TERM
CLASS I – 1-YR	Sara Todisco, Mayor	1/1/19 – 12/31/19
CLASS II – 1-YR	Ken Capobianco	1/1/19 – 12/31/19
CLASS III – 1-YR	Richard McCormack	1/1/19 – 12/31/19
CLASS IV – 4-YR	Steve Napolitano	1/1/19 – 12/31/22
CLASS IV – 4-YR	Paul Tarantino	1/1/19 – 12/31/22
CLASS IV – 4-YR	Mike Vena	1/1/19 – 12/31/22
ALT. I – 2 -YR	John Malcolm	1/1/19 – 12/31/20
ALT. II - 2 -YR unexpired term	Sergio Simoes	1/1/19 – 12/31/19
ALT. III – 2 YR	Steve Barcan	1/1/19 – 12/31/20
ALT. IV - 2 -YR unexpired term	Peter Demato	1/1/19 – 12/31/19

**GARWOOD BOARD OF HEALTH      THREE YEAR TERM      1/1/19 – 12/31/21**

Jane Tenore                      Megan Trusdell                      Li Faustino

**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES      FIVE YEAR TERM      1/1/19- 12/31/23**

Debra Broski                      Maria Nierstedt

**RECREATION COMMISSION      FIVE YEAR TERM      1/1/19 – 12/31/23**

Debbie Delise

Alternate I – 2 Yr TERM (unexpired term)	01/01/2019 – 12/31/2019	Kyle LeFever
Alternate II – 2 Yr TERM	01/01/2019 – 12/31/2020	Vanessa Schubring

**GREEN TEAM      THREE YEAR TERM      1/1/19 – 12/31/2021**

Kate Johnson	Brittani Johnson	Jeff Jotz	Russ Graham
Julie Graham	Sean Benoit	Shari Cohen	Rich Faustino

**GARWOOD MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE FOR 2019**

Barbara Tweedle	Steve Kaelbltin	Sam Rocco	Ralph Bernardo
Mary Emmons	Virginia Marinelli	Allan Tweedle	Caitlin Tweedle
Stacie Hoffman	Darlene Lipsett	Amefika Gray	Denise Ridente
MaryAnn Mule	Jen Blumenstock	Carla Gilbride	

**CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2019**

Kim Brown	Thomas Englese	Jennyfer Guerrero	Monika Shvetz
Carolyn Puerari	Kathy Gebler	Scott Haggmark	Melissa DiBattista
Brittani Johnson	Kate Johnson	Kathy Villaggio	Vanessa Schubring
Debbie McCarthy	Krystal Zawoyski		

**CITIZENS' ADVISORY PANEL FOR 2019**

Mark Gemett	Jason Blake	Kate Johnson	Arlene Yanogacio
Jennifer Kalis	Craig Gibson	Pat DiFabio	Joe Ragonese
Michele Capobianco			

**HISTORICAL COMMITTEE FOR 2019**

Pat DiFabio	Bruce Paterson	Helen Laucius	Chelsea Brandt	James Hart
Adele Lewis	Carol Lombardo	Jenny Brown	Max Blanton	

**UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY DEV. REVENUE SHARING COMMITTEE FOR 2019**

Kathy Villaggio	William Nierstedt	ALTERNATE:	Jen Blumenstock
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**UNION COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2019**

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Clint Dickson

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL for 2019**

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Deputy Coordinator:	Doug Stoffer, Police Captain
Police Chief:	James H. Wright
Fire Chief:	Allan Tweedle
Superintendent DPW:	Clint Dickson
First Aid:	Luciane Raibin
Engineer:	Michael Disko
Public Information Officer:	Ken Capobianco
Shelter Coordinator:	Ken Capobianco
Radiological Officer:	Sam Rocco
Business Representative:	Joseph Ragonese

**Representatives from Service Organizations:**

Knights of Columbus	Rich McCormack
Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary	Denise Pelusio
Health	Ellen Shelley
Law	James H. Wright
First Aid	Jimmy Willix

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>2019</b>
Police, Public Health & Safety	Councilman Michael Ince, Chair
	Councilman Sean Benoit
	Councilman Rich McCormack
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	
Board of Health Liaison	Councilman Michael Ince
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	
Streets, Roads and Ecology	Councilwoman Jen Blumenstock, Chair
	Councilman Rich McCormack
	Councilman Michael Ince
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	
Fire	Councilman Rich McCormack, Chair
	Councilman Sean Benoit
	Councilman Marc Lazarow
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	
Finance	Councilman Marc Lazarow, Chair
	Councilwoman Jen Blumenstock
	Councilman Michael Ince
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	
Buildings and Grounds	Vacant Seat, Chair
	Councilman Rich McCormack
	Councilwoman Jen Blumenstock
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	
Laws and License	Councilman Sean Benoit, Chair
	Councilman Michael Ince
	Vacant Seat
<b><u>OTHER or SPECIAL Committees of the Mayor</u></b>	
Historical Committee Liaison	Vacant Seat
Recreation	Councilman Sean Benoit
Senior Citizen Liaison	Councilwoman Jen Blumenstock
Library, Mayor's Representative	Councilman Marc Lazarow
School Board Liaison	Councilwoman Jen Blumenstock
Celebrations of Public Events & Holidays Liaison	Councilman Sean Benoit
UC Air Traffic Noise Advisory Board Representative	Vacant Seat
UC Transportation of Advisory Representative	Vacant Seat
Business and Industry/Chamber of Commerce	Carol Kearney

**COUNCIL MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE GOVERNING BODY AND GUESTS.**

**Councilman Benoit:** To my family, Maria and Ryan, and my parents, you're the best family that I could ever hope for and I want to thank you for all your love and support in this endeavor and in everything I've done in my life. To Mayor Todisco, Councilwoman Blumenstock, Councilman McCormack, Councilman Lazarow, and Councilman Ince, it is an honor and a privilege to be sitting up here with all of you. I look forward to working with you all on behalf of the residents of this wonderful Borough of Garwood. I have always been a big believer in leading by example. And I've been fortunate to have many people in my life to set that example. In my career, I've had some great attorneys to look up to and emulate in trying to be an ethical and effective advocate. Here on council, I have seasoned council members who have gotten a lot done to go to for advice, as well as a mayor who is selflessly committed to Garwood. More importantly, as a child, I had my parents to set that example for me to follow. My father was a police officer for thirty years, and my mother was a nurse. The examples they set for my brother and I have shaped the person that I am now. They showed me that you study hard, you work hard, you don't take the easy way out, and you do your absolute best to do the right things in life and make the right decisions. And most importantly, you support one another. When my wife and I came to live in Garwood it was because we wanted to make sure that our kids had the same type of childhood that we did. And for me, a huge part of that is making sure that I set the same type of example for them that my parents set for me. With this amazing opportunity that I have been given to be up here, I want to show them how to give back to their community; how to work on behalf of others. I want to show them what their civic duty is. I want to show them how to be a friendly neighbor to everyone in our town. And when it comes to the work that needs to be done up

here, I will do my best to study the issues; to know the full impact of the ordinances and resolutions that come before council. I will do my research and I will make informed decisions before casting my vote. And I do want to hear from the residents. Please, come to meetings, email me, call me, I will listen. Even if we ultimately disagree on an issue, I can promise you that I will listen and discuss your concerns, and take them into consideration. I say all this because I cannot, and I will not, forget that it was you, the residents of Garwood that put me up here tonight and have given me this opportunity. To know that you folks have placed your trust in me, that is incredibly humbling. It is a responsibility that I will carry with me and I will make sure that it guides my decisions and my actions up here as I move forward and work with such a wonderful council and our mayor. And I hope that come the end of my term, I will have accomplished a lot and that people will say that I led by example. Thank you everyone, and Happy New Year.

**Councilman Ince:** Good evening everyone, first and foremost, I want to thank my family, especially my wife Robin for all the support which has brought me to this swearing in ceremony tonight. I am also very grateful to all the friends, supporters, and residents of Garwood who have made this day possible. I am honored to represent the people of Garwood as a member of our Borough Council. As we begin 2019 I am looking forward to working with my fellow council members and Mayor Sara Todisco to bring about positive change for our community. Garwood faces many challenges, some of which are underway and will change the face of our community for many years to come. These changes must be handled in a thoughtful, professional, and business-like manner with Garwood's future always in mind. It is my intention to serve all the people of Garwood in the most hard-working professional manner. We will face problems and concerns which will require teamwork, cooperation, and the ability to listen - I am confident we will provide that. From a personal standpoint I intend to always be available and do my best to provide good government for all. Thank you

**Council President Blumenstock:** I would like to congratulate our new Mayor, Sara Todisco and welcome to the Council Mike Ince and Sean Benoit. I look forward to working with everyone up here and having a productive and successful 2019. As I go into my third year on Council, I'm struck by how fast the time has gone but pleased with everything we have been able to accomplish for Garwood. We have diligently been following our capital plans for our departments, allowing for new equipment and vehicles for our DPW, Police and Fire Departments, and we are on track to continue that and I look forward to discussions about this year's priorities. In that vein, I also look forward to working with the newly established Citizen's Advisory Panel and hearing from our residents about what capital projects are foremost in their minds right now. As DPW Commissioner I know we need to balance fiscal responsibility with the need to bring our equipment up-to-date and we will be hard at work to find that balance within the department. The Green Team was certified bronze last year by Sustainable Jersey, but our work doesn't end there. After a successful holiday fundraiser with the Adopt-A-Pots, I can't wait to work with the Team and its new members as we look for ways to beautify the town and strive to meet more of Sustainable Jersey's environmental standards.

Another initiative I'm especially proud to lead the upcoming Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service that we will be participating in here in Garwood for the first time. Together with a team of seven dedicated residents, we have been working hard to sign-up participants and gather donations for various service projects to take place on January 21<sup>st</sup>. I thank the Fire Department for allowing us to use their Fire House for this important day. We always talk about Garwood's big heart and volunteerism is at the core of that heart. I know that this day will be the shining example of Garwood's volunteer spirit. I'd also like to ask our Mayor and Council to work together on a new project: NJ's local government week, which will take place the week of April 7th-13th. This week allows residents to celebrate their municipality and it brings awareness to the role of local government. There are some great events and activities that we can bring to the residents to showcase our pride in Garwood and I look forward to being a part of that. I'll wrap it up here as I know everyone's eager to celebrate. Once again, congratulations to our new Mayor and Councilmen and thank you to everyone for coming out tonight to be a part of this. 2019 promises to be a great year and I'm ready and excited to get started.

Thank you!

**Councilman Lazarow:** congratulated everyone and looks forward to working with all. He thanked council for the honor of Council President.

**Councilman McCormack:** congratulated council members and commented. He thanked Mayor Lombardo for his help. He commented on working together.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Is there anyone in the audience who wishes to address the mayor and council please step to the microphone, and state your full name and address. Please limit your comments to five minutes.

**NONE**

**MAYOR'S ADDRESS:**

Good evening, Garwood. I cannot begin to tell you from the bottom of my heart what a complete honor it is to be here before you tonight as your Mayor, the 34th in the history of our great Borough.

As many of you know, one of the most impactful people in my life was my late grandfather, Frank Todisco. With family roots going back to before Garwood was even incorporated as Garwood, he loved this town. And while he is no longer with us, I can feel the presence of his pride in the room with us today.

While this is the greatest accomplishment of my life, it is not mine alone. It also belongs to my late grandfather and late grandmother, to my mom who taught me from a young age that a girl can grow up to be anything she wants to be, to my dad who always pushed me to try new things, to my uncle who not only supports me but also generously supports this town, to my grandparents from Maine and aunt from Massachusetts who made the trek down to be here, and to each of you who believed in my ability to lead our town. I'm here today because of all of you, to serve you as your Mayor, and I will never forget the great responsibility that brings.

I envision Garwood to stay true to its small town core, even as it faces changes and challenges. I envision Garwood to always remember and treasure its rich 116-year history. However, I also envision Garwood to adapt with the times to ensure communication is improved so residents know what is going on in town as well as all the services and events our town has to offer. In the next few years, through in-part redevelopment, we will experience a rejuvenated town center with increased walkability and sustainability. We will also welcome new residents to our community and I have no doubt we will all do so, as we always have, with open arms. I envision Garwood receiving more recognition for the amazing small town it is, both from inside our community and outside. I promise to work diligently over the course of my four-year term to make this vision a reality--a reality all Garwood residents can enjoy, whether a homeowner or renter, whether a lifelong resident or newcomer, or whether a child or a senior citizen. Together, we are and will always be one Garwood.

However, I cannot turn this vision into a reality alone. I know together, we can and we will achieve all this town and its people deserve--and even more. First, I'd like to start with the familiar--the Council. To all of you on this dais, to me, we are one team who will share in our future success together. To some, especially on the outside looking in, they may think this Council "politically-speaking" is 5 to 1, but to me, it is 6 to 0. I mean that from the bottom of my heart. It's not about Democrat or Republican, it's about the town, as this community has shown time and time again that it elects people, not parties. For that reason, I'd very much appreciate us not using the words Democrat and Republican on the dais. We are here in service to our community, not to a party. On a related note, I've been right where each of you are for the last 8 years, serving on committees and casting votes each meeting. I want you to know that I want to be your biggest ally and your biggest supporter. I've been fortunate to have served on all of the Council committees at one time or another. I'll be there for you to answer any questions you have and to make sure you have the information you need when casting votes. Each of you bring different life experiences and viewpoints, which I hope to have tapped into for the betterment of Garwood when making the committee assignments, which were announced tonight.

Second, to all the Borough staff. I truly appreciate all your efforts, whether it is making our streets safer, making our roads clear in the snow, or answering a resident's question about recycling--to name just a few. I appreciate how I've gotten to know each of you, and I very much look forward to working collaboratively to get things done for our residents.

Next and perhaps most importantly, we need to work collaboratively, as a team, with our residents in order to make Garwood's future the best it can be. That's why I have established a first-ever Citizens' Advisory Panel to solicit resident feedback about potential capital projects, like roads and equipment. I'm excited to see what the group I appointed tonight will do, particularly as it provides feedback to the Finance Committee as it creates this year's 5-year capital plan. I also very much look forward to seeing what all of the residents who were appointed to the various boards, commissions, and committees will do as part of our Garwood team. Thank you all so much for dedicating your time to these various groups.

Staying connected with our residents remains one of the most important things I can do to ensure I can successfully serve this town as your mayor. As always, I will happily make myself available to any resident who would like to meet with me, chat on the phone, or exchange emails. I know each of the members of this Council feel the same way. While Mayor's Saturday had been a monthly tradition in Garwood, the attendance was often very low, if anyone attended at all. After taking that into consideration, I've decided to start a well-advertised seasonal Breakfast with the Mayor event on one weekend morning each quarter in the hopes of getting more community participation. I plan to host the first one on February 2nd right here at Borough Hall. Together, let's make sure our lines of communication are open. Your government works best when it hears from you.

A small town like ours can only thrive with the enthusiasm and energy of the community and its volunteers. For that reason I'd like to see us celebrate all those that contribute to making our town great by creating a Community Spirit awards program. Under this program, you may nominate any person who helps to make Garwood the great, vibrant place it is, from a dedicated volunteer to a generous business owner to a neighbor who goes above and beyond. You may find the nomination forms on the Borough website or paper copies here in Borough Hall. I look forward to being the biggest champion of our community, celebrating those that make a difference, and inspiring others to do the same.

Our Council meetings are your local government at work, where we meet twice a month to keep the town open for business. These are formal, professional meetings that require structure and of course civility. As a change in protocol, I will be extending the public comment time from three minutes to five minutes for all residents who wish to address the Mayor and Council. After all resident comments are made and questions by all residents are asked, I will complete the public comment portion of the agenda by responding to each speaker to the best of my ability and I will ask the Council or other Borough professionals in attendance to respond as necessary. I understand and value your right to have your comments and questions stated on the record. I welcome you to do so. However, as a Councilperson the last 8 years, I've witnessed these formal meetings turn unproductive and inefficient at times and I expect our meetings to be professional and respectful at all times. The time for lengthier, back and forth conversations is frankly really not for a Council meeting. Instead, I encourage residents to contact me by email or by phone and I'd also be happy to meet with you. After all, anyone who knows me, knows I love to talk about Garwood! And I can say confidently, the rest of the Council will be happy to do the same.

Before I close my speech this evening, I would like to make a call to action on a few items that I believe are of utmost importance. For one, I strongly encourage and support the Council in developing a social media policy and launching official Garwood pages in the next 100 days. Also, I am eager to organize quarterly meetings between representatives of this governing body, the Planning Board, and the Board of Education to ensure strong communication between our entities and to foster greater collaboration. Finally, I would like to ask the Council to move swiftly in researching the proper type of street sweeper for our town's needs and to put forth a vote to finance this piece of much-needed equipment. As reported in late 2018, our 1990 street sweeper is no longer operable and I hope every member of Council will support this initiative to give our residents a better, more reliable service.

Finally, I thank all of you for being with us this evening. I thank my family, friends, and colleagues for being such a tremendous support system as I embark on this new journey. I'm excited to do so with the over 4,000 residents of Garwood. Together, we, as one Garwood, can ensure the best is yet to come for our great borough. Thank you again, good night, and happy new year.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Regular meeting of the Mayor and Council will be held on Thursday, January 10, 2019, in Council Chambers, at 7:15 p.m. Workshop Session to start at 7:00 p.m.



At 7:55 p.m. a motion to adjourn was made by Councilwoman Blumenstock, second by Councilman Benoit.

Respectfully submitted:

*Christina M. Ariemma*

**CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk**  
Borough of Garwood