

Borough of Garwood
MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM

Moment of Silence

Salute to the Flag

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Union County Hawk advertised on January 4, 2024. Notification was sent to the Star Ledger, and is posted on the Municipal website, 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).

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Blumenstock	P		
Councilwoman Boto	P	Councilwoman Nolde	P
Councilman Foley	P	Councilwoman Salmon	P
Councilman Lazarow	P	Council President Kearney	P

Also Present:

John Arthur, Borough Administrator

Adam Abramson, Borough Attorney

Sandy Bruns, CFO

Doug Stoffer, Chief of Police

Cathy Cameron, Borough Clerk

Mayor Blumenstock administered the Oath of Allegiance to Captain Rocco, Sergeant Suggs and Sergeant Priddy.

Report of Borough Attorney NO REPORT

Report of Borough Administrator

In my first weeks as Borough Administrator, I've spent most of my time meeting with Borough Department Heads, staff, elected officials, and administrators from neighboring communities. I'll be meeting with the Borough Engineer and School Superintendent tomorrow. My primary goal at this time is to get to know everyone that works on behalf of Garwood and to identify the areas of work that should be top priority. I also started in the middle of budget season, so I have spent much of my time discussing the budget with the Borough CFO and thinking about budgetary trends that we should have on our radar for 2025 and beyond. Some important projects which will impact next year's budget will require foundational work in 2024. Some other projects I'm currently working on include working on improvements that will make us fully compliant with new cybersecurity requirements from our insurance company and which will improve our defenses against cyberattack; preparing bid documents and soliciting quotes for repairs of borough equipment; hiring for open positions. I look forward to working with everyone and welcome anyone who would like to share ideas or discuss anything with me to call me at 908-789-0170, ext. 105 or email me at [J-Arthur@garwood.org](mailto:John.Arthur@garwood.org). I'm always open to discussing matters of importance to the community.

Report of Mayor Blumenstock

This past weekend, Council President Kearney and I made our way around to various food establishments in Garwood to discuss with them the new Skip the Stuff ordinance. We have a few more to stop into, and will hopefully catch up with those owners over the coming few days. We were happy to hear that most establishments had already been following these procedures, as it helps them reduce their costs. We also

heard from some that their customers had already been making requests to them that they stop using certain plastic take-out items, so they had made the switch already to natural materials. So it's good to hear that as a whole, our community is getting more educated on topics like this and making the little changes that can really make a difference. I just want to make a quick note, that straws were not included in this ordinance as it has been a part of state law since 2021 that food establishments not provide straws unless upon request. So that has been in place statewide for a few years now, so there was no need to encompass it in the skip the stuff ordinance. I know that there are other important items that our Council is focusing on, including the budget, and to some skip the stuff may seem trite, but to me this sustainability is just as important. In addition, I think this Council is really good at walking and chewing gum at the same time. We can tackle many things at once, both big and small. Switching gears, I just want to thank the Recreation Committee for a really fun easter holiday. They put in so much time decorating the float for the bunny ride. And the Easter Bunny Hunt at the Rec Complex went off without a hitch due to their hard work. The Rec Committee gave out hundreds of eggs and had lots of raffle prizes and pictures with the Easter Bunny. Arts and Crafts and a DJ just added to the day. So I want to send a big thank you to all of our volunteers, and to the PBA who also came to celebrate and handed out goody bags for the kids. Thank you also to the Fire Department for helping with the Bunny Ride Around. I was able to go around with the Fire Department during the ride and I can say it was definitely a highlight of my year watching the kids jump up and down as the bunny came by waving. All around a great way to get into spring. Also, just a reminder to everyone to get their tickets for the EFG's Annual Dinner, where the EFG will be celebrating 20 years of supporting teachers and students at Lincoln School. The Dinner will be on April 25th at 5:30-8:30 and we will be honoring teacher Matthew Burke and Paraprofessional Imperio Mormile. Tickets are \$40 and include buffet, beer, wine and soda. There is also a 50/50 raffle that evening and you can buy your tickets for that now for \$10 each. You don't need to be present for the drawing so make sure to buy your raffle tickets today. You can contact me or any other EFG member to purchase both tickets and raffles or go online to Facebook to purchase there. Just one last note, I will be meeting with the Rahway River Mayors Coalition tomorrow as well as meeting with the Raritan Valley Rail Mayors Coalition in a few weeks, so I'll updates on both of those coming up in future meetings.

Comments from the Council:

Councilwoman Boto

Thank you, Mayor. I am excited to announce the launch of the Adopt-a-Drain Program. I think we can all agree on the importance of doing all we can to mitigate flooding and keep our storm drains clear. As we see more and more quick moving storms that come on suddenly, keeping these storm drains clear from debris becomes something we must spend even more attention on. This is a community effort and with the collaboration of the DPW Superintendent and Foreman, we gathered a list of intersections that would benefit from the extra attention. Residents can adopt one of these drains to regularly check on and maintain. This program does not replace the work the DPW is already performing, it simply supplements it and offers them added support. They do of course continue to monitor and regularly sweep the drains, the community's efforts will help maintain them between cleanings. The link to adopt a drain will be found on the Borough's website under the DPW. There you will find information, tips, and the sign-up link. Residents will be able to select from the current intersections and if they prefer, they can include their own by selecting "other." Drains can be adopted by individuals aged 14 and over. We discussed drain adoption by groups like the girl scouts and as long as there is adequate adult supervision, it can definitely be done. Once a drain is adopted you will get a confirmation, some instructions and tips, as well as a certificate of adoption. We are asking residents to keep a log of what has been collected. Obviously, clean up frequency will vary depending on the season and drain conditions. I hope that together we can contribute to keep our environment safe and work to mitigate flooding. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Lastly, I would like to thank our Public Information Officer for her help in putting these materials together to post on the Borough's website and

assisting with the coordination and tracking, our DPW Superintendent and Foreman for taking the time to provide this information, the Public Works Committee and of course the Mayor for her support in getting this off the ground.

Councilman Foley NO REPORT

Councilman Lazarow

I just want to direct everyone's attention to the introduction of ordinance 24-11. This ordinance is basically making some minor changes at the recommendation of the state fire Marshall. This allows our fire department to be in compliance with the language used by the state and will protect the Borough from having to make additional changes if the state decides to clarify specific language for fire protocols.

Councilwoman Nolde

I would like to echo the Mayor's thank you to all of the Recreation Committee volunteers and our recreation director for all of the planning and preparation for the Easter Egg Hunt. A big thank you to the Committee volunteers for decorating the float and to the Garwood Fire Dept. for the Easter Bunny Drive around.

Councilwoman Salmon NO REPORT

Councilwoman Salmon commented on Ordinance #24-11 and GFAS funding.

Council President Kearney

Thank you, Mayor. We do have a lot going on tonight, so I will try to be as brief as possible for me. Starting off tonight with congratulations again to Captain Rocco, Sergeant Suggs and Sergeant Pridy. It's great to see so much support here, from both their families and the community, for the leadership of the Garwood Police Department. On the topic of the Police Department and staffing, I need to address comments made at Tuesday night's special budget meeting by members of the public. Police staffing has been a topic of conversation for every budget since I have been on this Council, and for many years prior to that. As with all things, our jobs here as Council Members involve balance and also prioritization because we work in an environment with financial resources which are limited by many factors--most of which are beyond the Council's ability to influence. My time on this Council clearly demonstrates I place a high priority on the financial support of our first responders, which includes funding sufficient resources and staff to accomplish the job. What I do not support, is alarmist dog whistles tying new Garwood residents to an imaginary crime wave that is apparently localized to us. This type of rhetoric is irresponsible, inaccurate, and if perpetuated will damage the ongoing community engagement initiatives of our officers. The Garwood Police Department is doing a good job, and I know this because we have a safe town by measurable standards, such as state and federal crime reporting. For the past several years, the Police Committee has worked with our new Police Chief, and the prior Chief, on quality-of-life issues expressed by residents, such as traffic safety, pedestrian safety, and parking. Our police officers have the time and means to address these things due to their diligent work on the basics of law enforcement. This is work that I see on a daily basis in Garwood, with my two-plus decades of service as an officer informing me on the topic. The number of officers in the Department is a topic of ongoing conversation in the Police Committee, but I will point out we recently added one new officer position to the roster. This is the first increase to the table of organization that anyone I've spoken with can recall, possibly in more than two decades. Additional increases to the total number of officers may be forthcoming, but that is a discussion to have with data and facts on our side; not with anecdotes or people passing by and noting the location of patrol cars. Finally, addressing the staffing needs of any Borough department or function as a member of this Council should not be done in a vacuum, or with

emotion overriding common sense. I have further comments on this topic, but I am going to save them for what I assume will be additional budget discussion later on. Thank you.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the Meeting of the Mayor and Council held on March 21, 2024.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Boto, second by Councilman Foley, to accept the Regular Meeting minutes as presented. All in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1) NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES

a) 03/21/2024, RE: Governor Signs Affordable Housing Bill Package

<https://www.njlm.org/CivicSend/ViewMessage/Message/226220>

b) 03/28/2024, RE: Health Benefit 2025 Costs, DCA Budget Cuts, Gov. Murphy Signs TTF

<https://www.njlm.org/CivicSend/ViewMessage/Message/226850>

2) RAHWAY VALLEY SEWERAGE AUTHORITY

a) 03/22/2024, RE: Minutes

https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/RVSA_0215_MINUTES.pdf

3) GARWOOD PLANNING BOARD

a) 03/28/2024, RE: Minutes

[https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/2_28_2024_PB_MINUTES\(1\).pdf](https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/2_28_2024_PB_MINUTES(1).pdf)

ALL RECEIVED AND FILED

ORDINANCES:

ADOPTION:

Municipal Clerk to read Ordinance No. 24-10 by title only:

ORDINANCE NO. 24-10

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BOROUGH CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF GARWOOD BY AMENDING CHAPTER 134, ENTITLED “SEWERS”, ARTICLE V, “INDUSTRIAL WASTE AND FEES”, SUBSECTION 134-16, “RATE SCHEDULE”.

[https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Ord._24-10-Sewer_Rate_Amenment\(1\).pdf](https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Ord._24-10-Sewer_Rate_Amenment(1).pdf)

List correspondence concerning Ordinance No. 24-10. NONE

Does anyone present wish to be heard concerning Ordinance No. 24-10. NONE

A motion was made by Councilman Foley, second by Council President Kearney, to close Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 24-10.

Discussion: NONE

A motion was made by Council President Kearney, second by Councilman Lazarow, to adopt Ordinance No. 24-10.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto AYE

Councilwoman Nolde AYE

Councilman Foley AYE

Councilwoman Salmon AYE

Councilman Lazarow AYE

Council President Kearney AYE

6-AYES Ord. #24-10 was adopted.

INTRODUCTION:

Municipal Clerk to read Ordinance No. 24-11 by title only:

ORDINANCE NO. 24-11

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BOROUGH CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF GARWOOD BY AMENDING CHAPTER 27, ENTITLED “FIRE DEPARTMENT”, ARTICLE I “GENERAL PROVISIONS”, SUBSECTION 27-2 “ORGANIZATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS” AND SUBSECTION 27-6 “CHIEF TO BE FIRE MARSHALL, FIRE INSPECTOR, FIRE PREVENTION OFFICER”.

<https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Ord. 24-11-Amend Chapter 27.pdf>

A motion was made by second by to introduce Ordinance No. 24-11.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto	AYE	Councilwoman Nolde	AYE
Councilman Foley	AYE	Councilwoman Salmon	NAY
Councilman Lazarow	AYE	Council President Kearney	AYE

5-AYES, 1-NAY Ord. #24-11 was introduced.

Municipal Clerk to read Ordinance No. 24-12 by title only:

ORDINANCE NO. 24-12

CALENDAR YEAR 2024 ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

<https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Ord. 24-12- CAP BANK.pdf>

A motion was made by Councilman Lazarow, second by Councilman Foley, to introduce Ordinance No. 24-12.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto	AYE	Councilwoman Nolde	AYE
Councilman Foley	AYE	Councilwoman Salmon	NAY
Councilman Lazarow	AYE	Council President Kearney	AYE

5-AYES, 1-NAY Ord. #24-12 was introduced.

COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OTHER REPORTS:

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL: Councilman Foley, Chair

Tuesday’s Special Budget Meeting provided a platform for open dialogue about the upcoming fiscal budget, allowing council members and residents to voice their opinions and suggestions. Tonight’s session focuses on the formal introduction of the budget, outlining its key components and anticipated impacts. One of the budget’s critical features is the allocation of additional funds to the police department. This investment will support advanced training, better equipment, and enhanced safety measures that are essential for the department to continue effectively safeguarding our community. Thus, I can proudly say that this budget prioritizes our town’s overall welfare by supporting various programs aimed at promoting community cohesion and health. These initiatives are designed to uplift and provide for the populace, ensuring that every resident benefit from the town’s resources. These initiatives include upgrading our 911 system, so if a person has a cellphone or a landline and calls 911 they can pinpoint the individual more efficiently and ensure better response time. I also want to thank again Police Chief Stoffer who’s leadership resulted in an almost \$70,000 reduction in overtime pay thus freeing up our budget and reducing the burden on the taxpayers to help the committee to make these crucial investments. Yours and the hard work of our police officers do not go unnoticed. On behalf of the committee and the town we thank you for that. Much can get done when we are willing to work together collaboratively in this town. Your work is a testament to that. The finance committee has strategically balanced increased spending on safety and welfare with overall fiscal responsibility. The budget reflects careful planning

and considerations to ensure financial stability and sustainability without compromising on essential services. In conclusion, the proposed budget is a testament to the continued commitment to our town's safety and welfare. With these significant investments we are setting a foundation for a safer, more prosperous community. As we introduce this budget, we acknowledge the council and public's contributions and look forward to these collaborative efforts to serve our town effectively.

FIRE AND OEM: Councilman Lazarow, Chair

In the month of March a total of 17 calls were received with 12 during the day and 5 at night. They included 7 alarm activations, , 2 kitchen/BBQ grill fires, 1 furnace malfunction, 1 smoke condition to name a few. The squad performed 12 hours of mutual aid service to both Rahway and Cranford. All of these activities totaled 130 hours. Other activities included 829 hours were devoted to HOUSE DUTIES, CLEANUPS, , TRAININGS, WORK DETAILS, & COMMUNITY SERVICE. On Saturday, April 6, 2024, Deputy Chief Gregory, Lieutenant Lasinski and Lieutenant Gesior attended a RIT Supervisor lecture at Union County Fire Academy. RIT stands for Rapid Intervention Team. A Rapid Intervention Team, as defined by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, "is a designated team that will serve as a stand-by rescue team for personnel and be available for the immediate search and rescue of any missing, trapped, injured or unaccounted for firefighters." In plain English, a RIT is a rescue team that stands at the ready and will immediately step in should a firefighter go down on a scene or need help. On Sunday, April 7, 2024, Deputy Chief Gregory and Lieutenant Lasinski attended a Kean Fire class hosted at Middlesex Fire Academy, instructed by State Fire Marshall Campagna, titled Fire Incident Report Writing. Incident reports are a instrumental part of the fire service, as these reports document everything from an incident and can be used in legal proceedings at a later date. It is imperative that reports are filled out quickly and accurately. This class went into great detail about the items that are often overlooked when being filled out, and how to properly fill out reports, as well as how to properly submit these reports to the government database. Deputy Chief Gregory and Lieutenant Lasinski are already preparing additional policies on what is required when filling out and submitting reports. They will be conducting refresher training for the members. In November 2023, Garwood Fire Department had undergone an ISO inspection. ISO's Public Protection Classification Program (PPC) is used by most U.S. insurers as part of their decision-making process on coverage and to establish fair premiums for policyholders for both personal and commercial insurance. ISO analyzes relevant data and assigns a PPC grade 1-10, 1 being an exemplary fire suppression program (best) and 10 being a fire suppression program that does not meet ISO's minimum criteria (worst). When a community's PPC improves, both residential and commercial insurance premiums may decrease. In 2017, Garwood Fire Department received a PPC (aka "ISO Rating") of 4 (61.2 credits out of 105.5). I am proud to announce that the Garwood Fire Department's PPC has risen to a 3 (74.5 credits out of 105.5). With the help of our officers, the department collectively devoted hundreds of hours in order to prepare for this inspection in the months prior. Based off of 2023 statistics, receiving a Final Community Classification 3, puts Garwood Fire Department among the top 20% of departments inspected nationwide. This is outstanding news and the fire department should be commended for this phenomenal achievement.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Councilwoman Salmon, Chair

Councilwoman Salmon summarized Resolution No. 24-075.

PUBLIC WORKS: Councilwoman Boto, Chair

In addition to their reoccurring activities, the DPW workers Cleaned up the common areas around the Municipal Complex and the Fire Department; Assembled and continued to install the permit parking signs in various locations of the Borough; Continued interior painting operations in various locations at the municipal complex; Performed street sweeping operations in various locations of the Borough due to warm weather

conditions; Removed the weeds along the perimeter of the turf field at the Sports Complex; Prepared the Sports Complex for the Easter Egg hunt and provided Public Works assistance during the event; Replaced the damaged ceiling tiles in the Council Chambers; Pruned the vegetation along the Myrtle Avenue walking path and along the brook at the municipal parking; Weeded and cleaned the vegetative waste from the Borough owned pots in various locations; Dragged the infield of the little league field at the Sports Complex for school functions; Inspected all Borough owned buildings and grounds for potential damage after the earthquake. Additionally, Council President Kearney was kind enough to cover a call last night with Lisa Lee, Director of Sustainability Programs. I will have more details after our April 17th committee meeting. That is all for my report.

POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY: Council President Kearney, Chair

The Garwood Police Department has recorded 1729 CAD entries during the month of March, 2024. These calls include: 92 motor vehicle stops; 25 parking complaints; 62 fixed traffic posts (Radar, Stop Sign, Distracted Driving); 15 motor vehicle crash investigations; 195 building/property checks; 40 medical assists; 85 community policing posts; 25 walking posts; 21 criminal investigations. The Garwood Police Department would like to remind everyone that it is extremely important to always file a police report when a package that was delivered is missing. Reporting these incidents allows the police to be aware of what areas are being affected and will help them develop patterns and suspects. The Garwood Police Department would also like to remind everyone that thefts increase this time of year. Thieves may not be targeting a residence in particular but steal things that can be easily taken when no one is around. We encourage residents to do what they can to reduce vulnerabilities this spring. Some examples are: Close and lock garages, sheds, and gates; Lock up ladders and other items that can be used to reach vulnerable windows and access points; Secure tools, equipment, and bicycles around your property. Please look out for your neighbors. Let them know if they leave equipment out or forget to close their garage door. If you observe suspicious activity, please call 9-1-1.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Councilwoman Nolde, Chair

Recreation: GPAC Discover Series: Discover the Art of Collage with Leona Seufert: Saturday, May 4th at 5 pm, Adults, Free! Learn how to add 3-dimensional items such as lace and fabrics to your collage and also digital collage, altering photographs, and superimposing images. Registration is now open at: www.garwoodrec.com

Youth Programs: Parent Assist Soccer: Registration still open! This program, for ages 2 ½ to 3 ½, is run by US Sports Institute/USA Sport Group and runs on Saturday mornings from 9 am to 9:45 am. Starts April 13th and goes until May 18th. This program is a fun and positive introduction to soccer for young children with a helping hand from Mom or Dad! Children learn the fundamental skills of soccer through fun games and activities. Soccer Squirts: Registration still open! This program, for ages 3 to 4 ½, is also run by US Sports Institute/USA Sport Group and runs on Saturday mornings from 9:50 am to 10:35 am. Starts April 13th and goes until May 18th. This program provides the fundamental skills of soccer including dribbling, passing, shooting, and defending. Classes will include a series of fun challenges, structured activities, and scrimmages adapted to ensure everyone achieves success. Soccer Squirts: Registration still open! This program, for ages 4 to 5 ½, is also run by US Sports Institute/USA Sport Group and runs on Saturday mornings from 10:40 am to 11:25 am. Starts April 13th and goes until May 18th. This program provides the fundamental skills of soccer including dribbling, passing, shooting, and defending. Classes will include a series of fun challenges, structured activities, and scrimmages adapted to ensure everyone achieves success. Garwood Summer Camp: June 24th – August 9th, 9 am to 12 pm, Grades K-8. The early bird price is \$110 per child until May 24th. Anyone interested in becoming a camp counselor or Counselor in Training, please email:

Recreation@garwood.org for details. Applications can be submitted through: www.garwoodrec.com , under “Programs”, under “Camp Counselor” or “CIT Application”.

Adult Programs: Adult Ceramics: Registration is open for the Wednesday, May 8th class. Adult Open Play Basketball: This is taking place Wednesday evenings starting at 6:30 pm at the Lincoln School. This is a free program. To register, visit: www.garwoodrec.com Adult Open Play Soccer: This has started back up and is taking place again on Friday evenings starting at 8 pm at the Garwood Sports and Rec Complex. This is a free program. To register, visit: www.garwoodrec.com TryCAN: Garwood is a proud member of the TryCAN Collaboration! TryCan coordinates inclusive recreation and social development programs for children with special needs. New Spring programs include Social Clubs, Reading, Tennis, Baseball, Taekwondo, and Pilates. For more information about these programs, please contact David Guida from the City of Summit by emailing dguidajr@cityofsummit.org or by calling (908) 277-2932.

Garwood Partnership for Arts and Culture: GPAC is excited to announce the first Garwood Poetry Festival to be held next weekend, April 20 and 21. The Garwood Library presentation on Saturday at 11:30 will include readings by six local poets. On Sunday, the Crossroads is hosting a reading by 12 NJ poets. A full listing of poets and their bios is available on the Garwood Website under Quick Links. Garwood Poetry Festival Program at the Crossroads Historical Committee: The regular meeting of the historical committee was March 25. Every two weeks, the historical committee is sharing an interesting fun historical fact illustrated by photos with the students at Lincoln School. Also discussed was the timeline for the use of the grant.

LIBRARY, MAYOR’S REPRESENTATIVE: Councilman Lazarow

April 15 at 1:00 pm Book Discussion Group Join us in the library for a lively discussion of this month’s book, “Finding Dorothy” by Elizabeth Letts. April 17 at 10 am to Noon - Ask Kiosk-Aging Services Kiosk – Union County Division of Aging Staff will be on hand to assist seniors (age 60+) or their caregivers with information on services, such as meal delivery, respite care, adult day care and support services for caregivers. April 20 at 11:30 am – Poetry Reading - In honor of National Poetry month, the Garwood Council for Arts and Culture will hold a Poetry reading at the Library featuring local artists. April 24 at 3 pm LEGO CLUB - Be inspired by this month’s theme or build whatever comes to mind. Some will be displayed in our showcase. Registration required Limit 12

SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON: Council President Kearney

Thank you, Mayor. There hasn’t been a Board meeting since my last report, but I do have a quick update on our continued meetings with the Board. Since our last Council meeting, Mayor Blumenstock and I have met several times with Superintendent Kinney and Board Members. We’ve advanced discussions on a number of issues which affect both the Borough and the District, and I am happy to again report substantial progress across the board. In our budget meeting on Tuesday night, we discussed the inclusion of a \$50,000 transfer to the district from the Vermella PILOT agreement. This is included in the budget introduction on tonight’s Consent Agenda. As we spoke about on Tuesday night, this transfer is a show of good faith that our Council is willing to work as partners in all areas of shared interest with the Board moving forward. While we will continue our general monthly meetings going forward for the rest of this year, I am also specifically committing myself and this Council to sitting down in a more formal process in the last quarter of 2024 to work on short and long term plans and goals of the Borough and the district, including a multi-year PILOT transfer agreement, in a collaborative manner. This will be much easier to accomplish in the last quarter since we will have a better idea of the Borough’s financial position approaching 2025. As I said the other night, I’m looking forward to working on this, I appreciate the Mayor’s support on this, and I’ve very much enjoyed the opportunity to get to know and work with some of the Board members and Superintendent Kinney this year. Finally, the Garwood Board of Education’s next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16th, so I will have a report from that at our next meeting.

GARWOOD SENIOR CITIZEN LIAISON: Mayor Blumenstock

On April 4th, the Senior Club welcomed Union County Surrogate Chris Hudak to speak about his work and the services he can offer the residents of Garwood. These include not just probating a will, but certifying administrators of estates, guardians of adults and minors, as well as adoptions. The Union County Surrogate's office is now using an online appointment based system, though you can also call for an appointment as well. And even better news, is that the Surrogate has now opened an office branch in Westfield, just down the street at Union County's Colleen Fraser Building on North Avenue. Thank you to the Surrogate for an informative presentation. At our next meeting, on April 18th, the Builder's Club from Lincoln School will be joining us for some bingo, so looking forward to that.

SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY LIAISON: Council President Kearney

The Small Business Board is scheduled to meet next week to finalize our upcoming Taste of Garwood event. Board members have been working with our Public Information Officer on the social media aspect of this event; we expect to have all of the advertising finalized at this meeting with an eye to the initial rollout to the restaurants within the next two weeks. Other topics of discussion will be our "Skip the Stuff" rollout, updates to the Borough Code regarding signage for businesses, and events for the second half of the year. The start date for Taste of Garwood is May 17th. I will have more to report at our next meeting

BOARD OF HEALTH LIAISON: Councilman Foley NO REPORT

PLANNING BOARD LIAISON: Councilwoman Salmon

Councilwoman Salmon provided an update to the March 27th Planning Board meeting.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Zoning Enforcement Officer's Report for March, 2024

https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Code_Enforcement_March.pdf

Property Maintenance Officer's Report for March, 2024

https://garwood.org/vertical/sites/%7B7F1088A0-CEC9-4505-80EE-1DF1BF7DFFBD%7D/uploads/Property_Maint_Rpt_March.pdf

A motion was made by Council President Kearney, second by Councilwoman Boto to accept Officer's reports. All in favor.

At 8:21 PM Mayor Blumenstock suspended the order of business to address the Social media comments regarding the GFD. Chief Scalzadonna clarified the certifications held by his officers as well as the requirements for Hazmat 1 certification. Chief Michale Scanio, Union County Mutual Aid Coordinator provided further clarification on the requirements for Hazmat 1 certification.

Discussion amongst Council members ensued.

At 8:43 PM Mayor Blumenstock resumed the order of business.

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.

Jill Pall, 54 Third Avenue, commented on the social media postings regarding the GFD; GFAS funding; and announced a second outdoor AED was purchased and in process of being installed in Hartman Park. She thanked Sgt. Wright and all involved in facilitating the AED purchase.

Rich McCormack, 101 Fourth Avenue, commented on the GFD.

Bruce Paterson, 325 Willow Avenue, commented on the GFD; requested clarification regarding the position held by Judy Zayas; PILOT funding; and the budget.

Luciane Raibin, 315 South Avenue, thanked the Mayor and Council for their support of the GFAS.

Rachel Herz, 61 Fourth Avenue, commented on the GFD.

John Bartolick, 231 Hemlock Avenue, requested clarification regarding the budget and the Master Plan.

The Clerk read two public comments into the record as follows:

- Michele Capobianco, 404 Myrtle Avenue, requested clarification regarding the budget handout and RVSA sewer charges.
- Coleen Hay, 516 Fourth Avenue, requested clarification regarding the Board of Health budget and Skip the Stuff flyer distribution.

A motion was made by Councilman Foley, second by Councilman Lazarow, to close public comment. All in favor.

Mayor Blumenstock thanked Ms. Pall and Sgt. Wright for the new outdoor AED.

Chief Scalzadonna clarified the position held by Judy Zayas.

Councilman Foley clarified budget questions.

Mayor Blumenstock and Chief Stoffer clarified the Skip the Stuff flyer distribution.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

CONSENT AGENDA

(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.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-076

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Garwood, County of Union, State of New Jersey, hereby appoint Jen Battiloro as Municipal Alliance Coordinator, effective April 11, 2024 in accordance with the Municipal Alliance Grant Fiscal year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-077

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the Borough of Garwood, County of Union, State of New Jersey hereby approves the list of members eligible for 2023 LOSAP Benefits from the Garwood Fire Department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the list attached be and is hereby made part of this resolution.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-078

WHEREAS, a proposal has been received from Motorola Solutions Inc., Box 161, Wharton, NJ 07885, for the purchase of new communication and signal systems equipment consisting of radio equipment for the use of the Police and Fire Departments, in accordance with the specifications and quote dated 02/16/2024 attached hereto and made part hereof; and

WHEREAS, said supplier represents to the Borough of Garwood that it is in accordance with State of New Jersey Contract 83909 for the purchase and implementation of new communication and signal systems equipment consisting of radio equipment for the use by the Police and Fire Departments at the price offered to the Borough of Garwood, to wit; \$390,000; and

WHEREAS, the Police Chief of the Borough of Garwood has researched whether said supplier is approved under contract for such communication and signal systems equipment from Motorola Solutions Inc., Box 161, Wharton, NJ 07885, as presented and his inquiry has resulted in verification; and

WHEREAS, said communication and signal systems equipment is purchased under Bond Ordinance No. 24-08 for the amount of \$390,000.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Garwood hereby award the aforementioned purchase of new communication and signal systems equipment consisting of radio equipment for the use of the Police and Fire Departments in accordance with the specifications and quote attached hereto and made part hereof, from Motorola Solutions Inc., Box 161, Wharton, NJ 07885, in accordance with the quote for \$390,000, attached hereto, and that the Borough Police Chief be and is hereby authorized to enter such order on behalf of this Borough and to sign such documents as may be required to consummate this transaction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the award of this quote be subject to the Borough Treasurer executing the appropriate Certification of Funds.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-081

RESOLUTION ADOPTING TECHNOLOGY RISK MANAGEMENT STANDARDS IN COMPLIANCE WITH STATEWIDE INSURANCE FUND'S CYBER RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN'S TIER ONE REQUIREMENTS

Whereas, the Borough of Garwood is a member of Statewide Insurance Fund which secures insurance protection through the New Jersey Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund (NJ MEL); and

Whereas, through its membership in Statewide Insurance Fund the Borough of Garwood requires cyber liability insurance coverage to protect the Borough of Garwood from the potential devastating costs associated with a cyber related claim; and

Whereas, in an attempt to prevent as many cyber related claims as possible, the Statewide Insurance Fund and Cowbell, the Fund's cyber liability carrier developed and released to its members the Cyber Liability Subjectivities; and

Whereas, the Statewide Insurance Fund the Cyber Liability Subjectivities outlines a set of best practices and standards that if adopted and followed will reduce many of the risks associated with the use of technology by the Borough of Garwood; and

Whereas, in addition to the reduction of potential claims, implementing the following best practices and standards will enable the Borough of Garwood to claim a reimbursement of a paid insurance deductible in the event the member files a claim against Borough of Garwood's cyber insurance policy, administered through the Statewide Insurance Fund and the NJ MEL.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Borough of Garwood does hereby adopt the following best practices and standards, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, in accordance with Cyber Liability Subjectivities of the Statewide Insurance Fund and NJ MEL Cyber Liability Subjectivities.

Information Backup Password Management Security Patches and Updates Email Warning Defensive Software Incident Response Plan Security Awareness Training Technology Practice Policy Government Cyber Membership

Be It Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution along with all required checklists and correspondence be provided to the Statewide Insurance Fund for their consideration and approval.

A motion was made by Councilman Lazarow, second by Councilman Foley, to adopt Consent Agenda as amended.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto AYE
Councilman Foley AYE
Councilman Lazarow AYE

Councilwoman Nolde AYE
Councilwoman Salmon AYE
Council President Kearney AYE

RESOLUTIONS DELETED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA:

RESOLUTION NO. 24-075

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION FOR GARWOOD STATION PHASE I (490 SOUTH AVE.)

WHEREAS, the Borough of Garwood entered into a Redevelopment Agreement with South Avenue Urban Renewal, LLC ("Redeveloper") dated August 25, 2017 for the development of Block 401 Lots 1, 2, 4, and 5; and

WHEREAS, the Developer has represented that the Construction of the multifamily residential and retail development has been completed as of December 22, 2022; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Redevelopment Agreement the Redeveloper has requested that the Borough execute a Certificate of Completion as evidence that the terms and conditions of the Redevelopment Agreement have been fully satisfied; and

WHEREAS, the Redeveloper acknowledges that the execution and recording of the Certificate of Completion does not relieve the Redeveloper of the conditions of the site plan approval related to signage for the parking garage and the need for valet parking for any future restaurant use within the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Garwood the Mayor is authorized to execute a Certificate of Completion in accordance with the Redevelopment Agreement entered into with South Avenue Urban Renewal, LLC for the development of Block 401 Lots 1, 2, 4, and 5.

A motion was made by Council President Kearney, second by Councilman Foley, to adopt Resolution # 24-075.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto	AYE	Councilwoman Nolde	AYE
Councilman Foley	AYE	Councilwoman Salmon	NAY
Councilman Lazarow	AYE	Council President Kearney	AYE

5-AYES, 1-NAY Resolution #24-075 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-079

Municipal Budget Resolution of the Borough of Garwood, County of Union, for the Fiscal Year 2024.

BE IT RESOLVED that the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget for the Year 2024.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Governing Body of the Borough of Garwood does hereby approve the Municipal Budget for the year 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said budget will be published in the in the April 18, 2024 edition of the Union County Hawk.

A public hearing on the 2024 Municipal Budget will be held on May 9, 2024 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, at which time and place public comments to said Budget for the year 2024 may be presented by taxpayers and other interested persons

A motion was made by Councilman Lazarow, second by Councilwoman Nolde, to adopt Resolution # 24-079.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto	AYE	Councilwoman Nolde	AYE
Councilman Foley	AYE	Councilwoman Salmon	NAY
Councilman Lazarow	AYE	Council President Kearney	AYE

5-AYES, 1-NAY Resolution #24-079 was adopted.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-080

RESOLUTION FOR CONDUCTING ANNUAL BUDGET EXAMINATION

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-78b has authorized the Local Finance Board to adopt rules that permit municipalities in sound fiscal condition to assume the responsibility, normally granted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services, of conducting the annual budget examination, and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 5:30-7 was adopted by the Local Finance Board on February 11, 1997, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.2 thru 7.5 the Borough of Garwood has been declared eligible to participate in the program by the Division of Local Government Services, and the Chief Financial Officer has determined that the Borough meets the necessary conditions to participate in the program for the 2024 budget year.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Garwood that in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:30-7.6a & b and based upon the Chief Financial Officers certification. The governing body has found the budget has met the following requirements:

1. That with reference to the following items, the amounts have been calculated pursuant to law and appropriated as such in the budget:
 - a. Payment of interest and debt redemption charges
 - b. Deferred charges and statutory expenditures
 - c. Cash deficit of preceding year
 - d. Reserve for uncollected taxes
 - e. Other reserves and non-disbursement items
 - f. Any inclusions of amounts required for school purposes

2. That the provisions relating to limitation on increases of appropriations pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.2 and appropriations for exceptions to limits on appropriations found at 40A:4-45.3 et seq. are fully met. (Complies with the "CAP" law.)
3. That the budget is in such form arrangement, and content as required by the Local Budget Law and N.J.A.C. 5:30-4 and 5:30-5.
4. That pursuant to the Local Budget Law:
 - a. All estimates of revenue are reasonable, accurate, and correctly stated
 - b. Items of appropriation are properly set forth
 - c. In itemization, form, arrangement, and content the budget will permit the exercise of the comptroller function within the municipality.
5. The budget and associated amendments have been introduced, publicly advertised, and adopted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Budget Law, except that failure to meet the deadlines of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5 shall not prevent such certification.
6. That all other applicable statutory requirements have been fulfilled.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

A motion was made by Council President Kearney, second by Councilman Foley, to adopt Resolution # 24-080.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto **AYE**
Councilman Foley **AYE**
Councilman Lazarow **AYE**

Councilwoman Nolde **AYE**
Councilwoman Salmon **NAY**
Council President Kearney **AYE**

5-AYES, 1-NAY Resolution #24-080 was adopted

NEW BUSINESS

Debra Broski

Board of Health

4/11/2024 -12/31/2024

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS AND REFUNDS AS LISTED ON FILE:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following claims as approved be and the same are hereby ordered paid when properly signed and verified; and the payment of payrolls as listed is hereby confirmed and ratified.

A motion was made by second by to adopt Payment of Claims Resolution.

Roll Call:

Councilwoman Boto **AYE**
Councilman Foley **AYE**
Councilman Lazarow **AYE**

Councilwoman Nolde **AYE**
Councilwoman Salmon **AYE**
Council President Kearney **AYE**

ADJOURNMENT:

The Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council will be held on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. in Council Chambers. Information for meetings is posted on the Borough website: https://garwood.org/gb_notices

A motion was made by Councilman Foley, second by Council President Kearney, to adjourn. Time: 9:49 PM