



CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
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Absecon, New Jersey 08201

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CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 15TH, 2025 6:30 PM
MINUTES

FLAG SALUTE – Mayor

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Councilmembers Alex Clark, Linda Evans, Steve Light, Christine Parker and Council President Richard DeRose

ABSENT: Councilman Nick LaRotonda and Councilman Mike Sykes

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Marrone, City Solicitor John Amenhauser Esq., City Clerk Carie Crone, Engineer Ed Dennis, Police Chief J.R. Laughlin.

STATEMENT OF THE SUNSHINE LAW & NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED

SWEARING IN OF OFFICER KOPPENAL – Chief Laughlin – Received a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Stockton University. Hired as a Class I, Special Enforcement Officer in Ocean City and later sponsored through the SLEO II Police Academy. Hired as a full time Police Office by Stockton College in June, 2023. Hire by the Absecon Police Department in February 2025, has completed field training program and will be assigned to squad three as a Patrol Officer. Oath administered by Mayor Marrone.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

2025 RESOLUTION OUT OF CONSENT

- 108** Consenting to the appointment of Sergeant to the City of Absecon Police Department, namely Neal Galletta.

Rich: May I hear a motion to move Resolution #108-2025? Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker

Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans-Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent; DeRose–Yes

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH – Chief Laughlin – Recently had a promotional exam for Sergeant. Several candidates involved in the studying and preparation, and I would like to say, they should thank they're families because they take the brunt of that – it's a long vigorous process to prepare to take the exam. Exam is conducted by the New Jersey State Chiefs of Police. Would like to congratulate Neal Galleta, he came in number one. Received a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Rowan University. Hired in 2009 by the Absecon Police Department as a Patrol Dispatcher, then hired as a Police Officer in 2012 after working as a Class II in the Sea Isle Police Department. During his time in Absecon, he has served in Patrol and Criminal Investigations Division. Also holds the position of Vice President of the Mainland PBA and is a member of the Italian American Police Society of New Jersey. He will be assigned to Squad 3 as a shift supervisor. Oath administered by Mayor Marrone.

PRESENTATION – JIF Safety Presentation by Joe Henry of Hardenberg Insurance Group.

Joe – Absecon's Risk's Manager as required by being part of the JIF (Joint Insurance Fund). Also required to have a Safety Committee. It's required annual to have safety on the Agenda. We develop a topic and pass it along to your Safety Committee. Heat injury and stress prevention is the topic. Heat is the leading cause of death in the work place. It has long been recognized as an occupational hazard. OSHA Act of 1970 states every employer must provide a safe working environment. Since 2021 OSHA has been developing a heat injury and illness prevention standard. Some suggestions, modified work schedule, self-pacing and extra breaks, keeping hydrated and most importantly a buddy system. Training is available through the JIF. Health and welfare of your employees is paramount.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

2025 ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

- 04** Replacing Ordinance #08-2019, relating to Criminal History Record Background Checks for employees and volunteers involved with City Programs or services that can/will have contact with minors.

Motioned for the first reading of Ordinance #04-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded:

Councilwoman Evans

Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent; DeRose–Yes

This Ordinance will be posted, laid over, and published according to law. A Public Hearing, second, and final reading will be held on June 5th, 2025.

2025 ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

- 03** Amending Ordinance 13-2018 – an Ordinance repealing and replacing Section 224-194 "Affordable Housing" of the City of Absecon's Land Use and Development Ordinance to address the requirements of the Fair share Housing Act and the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC) regarding compliance with the City's Affordable Housing Obligations.

Motioned for the second reading of Ordinance #03-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded:

Councilman Light. Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent; DeRose–Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #03-2025:
Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Clark
All in Favor, None Opposed.

No Discussion.

Motioned to close the public portion: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilman Light
All in Favor, None Opposed.

Motioned for the final reading and adoption of Ordinance #03-2025: Councilwoman Parker;
Seconded: Councilman Clark
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent;
DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #03-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

CONSENT AGENDA - All matters listed under item, Consent Agenda, are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be discussed separately.

- 109** Authorizing the sale of personal property not needed for public use under N.J.S.A, 40A:1-36.
- 110** Authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Shared Services Agreement with Galloway Township for an Electrical Subcode Official.
- 111** Authorizing Change Order No. 1 for the 2024 Road Program.
- 112** Approving the insertion of a special item of revenue into the 2025 Municipal Budget to allow for the receipt of \$2,800.00 from the State of New Jersey Highway Traffic Safety.
- 113** Approving the insertion of a special item of revenue into the 2025 Municipal Budget to allow for the receipt of \$11,632.08 from the State of New Jersey Recycling Tonnage.

PUBLIC PORTION – (Agenda items only)

Motioned to open to the public: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
All in Favor, None Opposed.

No discussion.

Motioned to close to the public: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
All in Favor, None Opposed.

CONSENT AGENDA VOTE

Motioned to move Consent Agenda: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent;
DeRose–Yes

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST – \$2,976,986.43

Motioned to accept: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker

Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent; DeRose–Yes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Budget Meeting Minutes – 2/27/2025

Regular Meeting Minutes – 3/6/2025

Budget Meeting Minutes – 3/13/2025

Regular Meeting Minutes – 3/20/2025

Regular Meeting Minutes – 4/3/2025

Motioned to accept the Minutes: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilman Light

Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Absent; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Absent; DeRose–Yes

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Light – Public Works: Met on the 5th, topics discussed were the Road Program and the Shore Road Raising Project. Some maintenance items and the Wagon Wheel Ballfield lighting. Next meeting June 17th, at City Hall at 5pm.

Councilman Clark – Finance: Met this evening prior to the Council Meeting. Reviewed our Budget decision for 2025 and looked at goals and ideas to help lower bills and increase revenues for 2026.

Councilwoman Evans – Community Affairs: Annual Senior Brunch was a huge success, thank you to all the volunteers and Council who came to help. Next on agenda is the Memorial Day Parade.

Councilwoman Parker – Public Safety: Thanked Councilwoman for a great Senior Brunch, it was a job well done. Thank you to Officer Ben Massino, who made his second appearance at the Senior Brunch calling Bingo. Was absent from the meeting, so deferred to Councilman Clark.

Councilman Clark: Deferred to the Chief.

Laughlin: We discussed the same things we talk about all the time, the speeding in town and being careful of our pedestrians. The Highway Safety Grant was specifically given to us for pedestrian safety, and that is due to our success from last June. Public has asked us to publish the reports of calls of service, we have been putting on our Facebook page. Complaints about not having names for those arrested. Best practice is to not put names out there because people can easily get things expunged, we get them on a weekly basis, processed thirty-two in the last two weeks alone. Recently lost a past officer, Greg Herman, he was hired in 1979 and had a spectacular twenty-five-year career here, along with raising his family in Absecon.

Engineer Ed Dennis: We're in the in between phase of our last year's capital program and this year's capital program, working on the Public Works Committee on that. Working on the revisions for the County for Shore Road. Working on maximizing Grants to help with the budget, we put into motion a program from the NJ IBank. Through this there's significant funds available to Absecon for drainage work, and we've had some drainage projects on the shelf. Also, opportunities through that program to be reimbursed for studies we've already done.

City Clerk: Monthly Report – April

- Construction Office: \$13,591.00
- Municipal Clerk's Office: \$11,124.00
- Municipal Court: \$21,801.06
- Tax Office: \$1,343,625.30

Mayor Thomas Marrone: Attended the County Mayor's Association meeting and gave a call to actions to our fellow County Mayors, regarding the situation we've been facing with the motels and Social Services lacking in providing services to those places here from other Counties. Working closely with Galloway Mayor to make sure that other Counties aren't placing people here without any resources. Asking that all Mayors join in with us on the twenty-eight-day length of stay for transient occupancy. Attended the grand opening for Aldi, absolutely encouraging for our business district and our local economy. Jersey Cow is shooting for Memorial Day opening. Shared service with Galloway for Electrical Inspector, we preach smart spending and this is one of the moves to try to keep Absecon efficient and affordable. Senior Brunch was top notch and truly appreciate all the work that was done.

Chief Laughlin: Please shop locally. Steal and Deals will be opening in the old Staples building.

PUBLIC PORTION

Motioned to open to the public: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Clark
All in Favor, None Opposed.

Allison Maxfield – 311 E. Wyoming. Social Worker in the area for sixteen years. The situation with the housing in the hotels is unless you have substance abuse or co-occurring mental issues saying your suicidal it's very hard to get into any thirty-day treatment program. There're issues with JFS (Jewish Family Services), which is the safety net in the area. There's also the PAK team, which is the safety net for the mentally ill. Without the social safety net of mental hospitals there's a tremendous amount of mental ill people roaming the streets. There need to be paper trails of arrest for them to get help and group housing. Understaffed and underfunded for the needs.

Mayor Marrone – Our bigger issue is we have an Ordinance for length of stay and some of our Motels are taking advantage of the system and allowing them to stay past the time allowed. Next goal is to start a Mayoral Homeless Taskforce and your knowledge would be a great asset.

Council President DeRose – Our goal is to break the vicious cycle and get the proper resources.

Motioned to close to the public: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Clark.
All in Favor, None Opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned to adjourn: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Clark

All in Favor, None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted,


Carie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 6-5-25