



CITY OF ABSECON
Municipal Complex
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CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 7TH, 2025 6:30 PM
MINUTES

FLAG SALUTE – Mayor

ROLL CALL

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

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

PUBLIC HEARING – COMCAST – Fred DeAndrea, Senior Director of Government Affairs for Comcast. Here tonight pursuant to the franchise contract with the City of Absecon, which is our license to operate in your town. Hearing is required by State Statute and regulations and provides the members of the public to present their views on Comcast. If you aware of any residence that are unserved let us know. No action is required tonight from the Governing Body, again just a chance for the public to give feedback. Gave history and statistics of Comcast, Xfinity.

No public comment or question.

Council President DeRose – Thank you personally, anytime the City has needed anything from Comcast you deliver very quickly, very appreciative of the service you personally provided on the Government Affairs side. Did receive an email from a resident regarding a dead pole, I will forward it.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

2025 ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

- 05** Bond Ordinance providing for various 2025 Capital Improvements, appropriating \$1,000,000 therefor and authorizing the issuance of \$952,000 Bonds or Notes of the City to finance the cost thereof.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #05-2025: Councilman LaRotonda; Seconded: Councilman Clark. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #05-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilman Light. All in Favor, None Opposed.

No Discussion.

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

Motioned for the final reading and adoption of Ordinance #05-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilman LaRotonda
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes; DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #05-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

06 Establishing Salary Ranges for the City of Absecon.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #06-2025: Councilman LaRotonda; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #06-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilman Light. 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 #06-2025: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes; DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #06-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

07 An ordinance amending ordinance 12-2023 – Amending Chapter 216 of the City of Absecon Code, Governing Hotel and Motel Registration.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #07-2025: Councilman LaRotonda; Seconded: Councilman Clark. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #07-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker. All in Favor, None Opposed.

Pastor Judy – Absecon Presbyterian Church – would like to propose an amendment to make an exception for current Absecon residents, those who have an Absecon I.D.

J. Amenhauser – If we incorporate your proposed language, we'd run into Constitutional issues, because you can't discriminate against out of towners. It creates an issue with the Commerce Clause and if challenged I can guarantee we wouldn't be successful in having it upheld.

Mayor Marrone – Thank you for joining the Homeless Task Force, I really appreciate your passion. With anyone with specific incidents please reach out to us or the Police Chief.

Chief Laughlin – this isn't against anyone homeless, our hotels/motels aren't set up to be living quarters. It's not humane for them to be put there long-term.

Councilwoman Parker – Thank you Pastor Judy, you've been very understanding during this process, I know where your heart is and know it's been hard for you to hear, but appreciate you taking the time to understand where we're at with this.

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 #07-2025: Councilman LaRotonda;
Seconded: Councilwoman Evans
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes;
DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #07-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

- 08** An ordinance amending Chapter 258 of the Code of the City of Absecon establishing prohibitions against aggressive solicitation within the City.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #08-2025: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #08-2025: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Sykes. All in Favor, None Opposed.

No Discussion.

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

Motioned for the final reading and adoption of Ordinance #08-2025: Councilwoman Parker;
Seconded: Councilman LaRotonda
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes;
DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #08-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

- 09** An ordinance amending Chapter 330 – Vehicles in Traffic, of the Code of the City of Absecon, establishing regulations for the parking of roll-off containers along roadways within the City of Absecon.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #09-2025: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #09-2025: Councilman LaRotonda; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
All in Favor, None Opposed.

No Discussion.

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

Motioned for the final reading and adoption of Ordinance #09-2025: Councilman Clark;
Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes;
DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #09-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

- 10** An ordinance amending Chapter 270 of the Code of the City of Absecon, establishing regulations for prohibition of commercial vehicles in residential zones.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #10-2025: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Sykes. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #10-2025: Councilman Sykes; Seconded: Councilman Clark. All in Favor, None Opposed.

No Discussion.

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

Motioned for the final reading and adoption of Ordinance #10-2025: Councilman Clark;
Seconded: Councilman Light
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes;
DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #10-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

- 11** Amending Ordinance 11-2024 – Amending Chapter 254 of the City of Absecon Code thereof titled Peace and Good Order.

Motioned for the Second reading of Ordinance #11-2025: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilwoman Parker. **Roll Call:** Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

Motioned to open the meeting to the public for comment or discussion of Ordinance #11-2025: Councilman Light; Seconded: Councilman Clark
All in Favor, None Opposed.

No Discussion.

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

Motioned for the final reading and adoption of Ordinance #11-2025: Councilman Light;
Seconded: Councilwoman Parker
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes;
DeRose–Yes

Ordinance #11-2025 has been heard and is finally approved.

Motioned to add Resolution #157-2025 – Accepting Volunteer Fire Fighters to the Consent Agenda: Councilman Clark; Seconded: Councilman LaRotonda. All in Favor, None Opposed.
Roll Call: Clark–Yes; Evans–Yes; LaRotonda–Yes; Light–Yes; Parker–Yes; Sykes–Yes;
DeRose–Yes

Council President DeRose – Explained the exception was made to add this resolution so the new volunteers can attend the next Academy, which will start prior to our next meeting.

Councilman Clark – Have coached these two young gentleman, and it's great to see them give back to the community they grew up in. Two of the best guys I could vouch for and very proud.

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.

- 148 Authorizing the acceptance of, and when authorized, the release of various street opening permit security deposits – Permit #10-25.
- 149 Authorizing the acceptance of, and when authorized, the release of various street opening permit security deposits – Permit #19-25.
- 150 Authorizing the acceptance of, and when authorized, the release of various street opening permit security deposits – Permit #20-205
- 151 Authorizing the payout of accumulated time for an employee who resigned from the City of Absecon during 2025.
- 152 Authorizing to rebuild the router pump and to purchase equipment/materials from Granturk Equipment Co., Inc.
- 153 Authorizing for HVAC Services for various departments.
- 154 Authorizing the insertion of a special item of revenue into the 2025 municipal budget to allow for the receipt of \$2,100 from the State of New Jersey Highway Traffic Safety.
- 155 Authorizing to cancel a portion of the 3rd quarter, the 4th quarter of 2025 and the preliminary of 2026 taxes on the property located at 315 Pennsylvania Avenue (Block 83, Lot 8).
- 156 Requesting the County of Atlantic to consider the removal of the right turn prohibition of southbound Pitney Road at Woodcrest Avenue.

157 Accepting volunteer Fire Fighters into the Absecon City Fire Department.

PUBLIC PORTION – (Agenda items only)

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

Bill Hoch – 615 New York Ave. – Regarding Resolution #156-right hand turn on Woodcrest, previous administration process went through the process to have that removed and supposedly the County was okay with it, but Council never took the sign down.

Council President DeRose – Correct, it came back to our attention. Previous Council had gone through the process then never sent the request to the County. So as a new Council we have to put in the request again and as soon as they say yes, the sign will come down.

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

CONSENT AGENDA VOTE

Motioned to move Consent Agenda: Councilwoman Parker; Seconded: Councilman Light

Roll Call: Clark – Yes; Evans – Yes; LaRotonda – Yes to all but #150-Abstain; Light – Yes; Parker – Yes; Sykes – Yes; DeRose – Yes

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST – \$1,645,155.44

Motioned to accept: Councilwoman Parker; Seconded: Councilman Clark

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes – 7/17/2025

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

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Light – Public Works: No meeting this month. Next meeting falls on Labor Day, so can check on are website for an update on that meeting. Thank you to all participants in the National Night Out. Thank you to Public Works for maintaining all our parks as well as all of our buildings. Our Public Works do a lot more than other communities, they don't out source a lot of stuff, they do it in house, we have a lot of talented people within our town and they save our community as well as our residents a lot of money. Heard from two residents, both following up on pedestrian safety – one for Highland Blvd. and the other New York Ave. We are working on grants for those and working diligently on a plan to keep the cost down. Resident inquired about a punch list for Crestview, will follow-up with Engineer.

Councilman Clark – Finance: Has not met, will meet again in September. Will be working on the 2026 budget, getting an early start with working on the department's budget request.

Councilwoman Evans – Community Affairs: National Night Out was very successful, lots of participation from the local businesses and vendors. Enjoyed by everyone there, County Sheriff O'Donoghue stated he had attended several towns events and Absecon was the only one that everything was free. Thanked the Police and Fire Department.

Councilman Clark – People don't realize how much time the Chief, his crew, Officer Bethea, Capt. Mazer, Lt. Huenke all put in to make this event successful. Their time and efforts definitely need to be recognized.

Chief Laughlin – Thanked Council for support. Will not allow outside vendors because I believe National Night Out is about giving to the public, it's about bringing our residents and children down to interact with our First Responders. Thanked the local businesses. If we could do it once a month we would, our officers love being with the public. Very proud of our Police Department and everyone that's involved. Very grateful for the man and woman that work for us – we're asked to do so many things and our attention to detail is on all these things, I'm taking a back by how hard everyone has worked this year to continue to provide these services.

Councilwoman Evans – Met tonight, main concern now is Creekfest, food trucks are confirmed, looking forward to another great night out for our community. Still looking for volunteers.

Councilwoman Parker – Public Safety:

Chief Laughlin: Thanked Leigh Gadd for all his help with the Ordinances. Would also like to recognize him on his persistence with the clean up and maintenance of the commercial properties along Route 30. Ordinance violations have been issued and some have gone to court, it has been very effective and we're going to continue to work hard at that. Traffic safety, last couple years we have received grant money for aggressive driving, this year we got extra for pedestrian safety. We put a couple plain clothes officers out in the crosswalks, and summons were issued, important to stop for a pedestrian in the crosswalks. Working hand-in-hand with the County Task Force on aggressive driving and that has been very successful. Prosecutor, Bill Reynolds, will be holding a mass, for healing and honoring the victims of fatal crashes, promoting our traffic safety slogans. One loss of life due to speed or intoxication, is one life too many, and impacts all. Hooked on fishing was huge success, great turnout. August 5th, National Night out, everything is free. No July movie in the park, looking to do something with Field of Dreams after school starts. All proceeds will go to the Field of Dreams and not to our Christmas program.

Councilwoman Parker – Community Affairs – Mass for healing was held at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church on 7/23, it was a pretty solemn mass, but was necessary and would like to see again. It memorialized the people lost in traffic accidents and also honored the Police Officers that respond. Thanked the Prosecutor's Office along with our Police Department for putting this together. We had six officers graduated from the 30th graduating class of the Atlantic County Police Training Center. National Night Out, pretty covered, great seeing the six new officers there and also being able to walk there on the Crestview Ave. Phase I project. Met Monday, discussed the previous items, also talked about the bridge, which is being addressed. Also touched base on the Movie fundraiser for Field of Dreams in September, will be working with the Police Department to plan that.

Chief Laughlin – The Movie will be Saturday, September 13th. Last time we hired untrained officers was in 1990. Graduation was a fantastic day and one of the highlights of my career. Aug. 21st at Church by the Sea, 11-6, anybody in the position homelessness to come out, there will be medical and mental help, job placement help, housing along with hot meals and personal hygiene items.

Councilman Sykes – Parks & Playgrounds – Haven't met yet this month, will meet on 8/19. Couple things on the Agenda to discuss with the Committee and a couple things in the works. Football season starting, fields look great. National Night Out, huge thank you to all involved. Really neat to see the community come out. Huge reflection on how the town can come together.

Councilman LaRotonda – Economic Development – Haven't met this month yet, next meeting is 8/21. Also, would thank all the businesses that participated in National Night Out. Thanked all who came out to Jersey Cow's grand opening.

Engineer Ed Dennis: Project to update the City Hall Lobby, those are ADA compliance updates, the bid opening will be 8/19. Road Program and raised crosswalk project are moving along in the design process, will go out to bid soon. Last meeting approved flashing crosswalk signs on New Jersey Avenue and Highland Blvd., contracts have been sent to the contractor to get him scheduled. Met with Atlantic County Engineers Office regarding Shore Road Project, left that meeting with the understanding that the final package will go into the County this month and our expectations is we'll be moving into the bid process very shortly after that.

Councilman Light – For the Shore Road project, is it in the bid packet to upgrade the lights.

Ed Dennis – Not part of the Bid Packet, but can certainly address it in parallel with the project.

Mayor Thomas Marrone: Thank you Chief for a great National Night Out. Have had two meetings with our Homeless Task Force and have poured a lot of time and effort into the Ordinances that were passed tonight. The Task Force has three different members that work in the Social Service Industry, our Police Department, and now Galloway Township has joined. Has been very productive. Encourage all Council that are able to attend August 21st at the Church by the Sea, the time will be very rewarding in helping the people.

PUBLIC PORTION

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

Eric Herrington – 17 Stoney Brook Dr. – Traffic light Southbound Mill Rd. every now and then the green light will only last about 5-10 seconds long. It appears to follow when someone is crossing the street, may be activated by the walk signal. Very frustrating during morning rush hours.

Council President DeRose – Asked Ed to reach out to the County and State, they will look into the timing mechanism and if its running properly then we can take the next step to have them change it.

Chief Laughlin – The Police Department put a request in a year ago, and it seemed to be better, but does seem to be going quick again.

Allison Maxfield – 311E Wyoming Ave. – Love what you have in mind for the Task Force and the idea at the Church. Last meeting talked about speed issue, thinks it would be wise to create signage for residents to put on their lawn.

Nick LaRotonda – We did do that before.

Mayor Marrone – It is 100% time to do that again.

Council President DeRose – We'll count how many are left and push out a campaign for them.

Allison – Thinks there's going to be a crisis with lack of Food Banks, especially in the Smithville area, with tariffs and the economy. And when people are hungry they tend to do bad/illegal things, need more food banks in the area and need to be supported by the Council.

Chief Laughlin – Probably more Food Banks around that we're aware of, but not made public because they're struggling due to people donating to the wrong places.

Council President DeRose – Asked for the Task Force look into having a Food Drive.

Allison – Would love to see an art center or rec center in the City.

Council President DeRose – My number 1 dream would be to bring a rec center to Absecon, but financially don't see it happening any time soon. Councilman LaRotonda comes up with an idea at least once a month, definitely a goal.

Allison – Believes once of the Churches can house an art center.

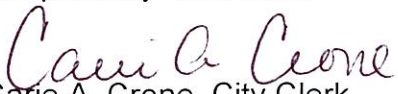
Council President DeRose – Offered to connect here with the Absecon Art Alliance.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned to adjourn: Councilman Sykes; Seconded: Councilman Light
All in Favor, None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted,


Carrie A. Crone, City Clerk

Approved: 9-4-25