COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 29, 2025, 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL

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1. Mayor Buss called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Mayor Buss asked everyone to join in the salute to the flag.

3. Administrator Capristo read the following Sunshine Statement: "The notice requirements of the New Jersey Public Meetings Law have been satisfied by noticing the Asbury Park Press and the Two River Times on January 3, 2025, stating that a regular meeting of the Township Committee would be held on October 29, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., 1 Veterans Way, Colts Neck, NJ 07722, Town Hall. A copy is on file in the office of the Township Clerk."

   "Further notice was provided to the Asbury Park Press and Two River Times on October 10, 2025, noting the meeting time change from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m."

4. Roll call by Municipal Clerk Lindsey indicated the following:

Present:	Mayor Tara Torchia Buss, Deputy Mayor Michael Viola, Committeeman Dan Buzzetta, Committeewoman Sue Fitzpatrick and Committeeman Frank Rizzuto
Also Present:	Kathleen Capristo, Township Administrator, Trina Lindsey, Municipal Clerk, and Meghan Bennett, Township Counsel
Absent:	None

5. **Resolution 2025-173:** Executive Session – Potential Litigation, Contract Negotiations and Personnel

   Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola, seconded by Committeeman Rizzuto and a unanimous voice vote, the resolution was adopted.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Torchia Buss		X			
Deputy Mayor Viola	M	X			
Buzzetta		X			
Fitzpatrick		X			
Rizzuto	S	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

   After closed session, Mayor Buss asked for a motion to go back to open session. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola, and a unanimous voice vote, the Governing Body was back in open session at 7:33 p.m.

   Mayor Buss stated that moving forward the Township Committee will have a moment of silence at the beginning of every meeting after the pledge of allegiance. Mayor Buss stated that she would like a moment of silence tonight for military service and first responders.

6. **Discussion Item(s)**

   a. 22 Princeton Lane – Street Opening Permit Moratorium Relief

      Mr. Vazgen Sevumyants was present. Mr. Sevumyants stated that he submitted an application to build a home at 22 Princeton Lane. Mr. Sevumyants stated

that approximately three weeks after he submitted an application the road was paved. Mr. Sevumyants stated that NJ Natural Gas submitted an application for a street opening permit which was denied due to the moratorium restriction on the newly paved road. Mr. Sevumyants stated that he is seeking relief of the moratorium restrictions so that NJ Natural Gas can run a gas line to his home.

Administrator Capristo stated that the Township Engineer, Glenn Gerken has approved the relief with conditions which are outlined in his memo.

The Governing Body unanimously approved the request for moratorium relief with the conditions outlined in Mr. Gerken's memo.

b. Affordable Housing

Mayor Buss stated that the township's affordable housing attorney, Tom Trautner was present to speak about The Grande. Mayor Buss and Committeeman Buzzetta stated that they have received several questions from residents in The Grande such as will residents in The Grande who have owner occupied units receive a 1099 for taxes. Mayor Buss stated the answer is no. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he has received questions such as if a resident is in an owner-occupied unit and the unit owner chooses to extend the affordability controls on that unit, can they rent the unit. Committeeman Buzzetta stated the answer is no.

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the residents in The Grande who are in owner occupied units received an offer letter to extend the affordability controls. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the time frame to respond to that offer has been extended to December 17, 2025.

Mr. Trautner stated that he is present to answer any questions from the public that they may have.

Mayor Buss opened the discussion to the public.

Kevin O'Brien, resident, asked if the 66 owner occupied units can be retained under the affordable housing program for $40,000 each unit. Mr. O'Brien asked how it is being paid for by the township.

Deputy Mayor Viola responded to Mr. O'Brien stating that the township adopted a bond ordinance earlier in the year to pay for the offer of extending the affordability controls on those units.

Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the cost of offering $40,000 to each owner occupied unit to extend the affordability controls is less than the cost of the requirement to build 300 plus more affordable housing units in Colts Neck.

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the affordable housing trust currently has $1.3 million dollars in it, which is not tax payer monies. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the township submitted an appeal to the court to have those funds released to the township. Deputy Mayor Viola explained that if the appeal is granted the township will use those funds for the cost to extend the affordability controls on the owner-occupied units that accept the $40,000 offer.

Tina Rose-Yuli, resident, stated that the maximum resale price of each owner-occupied unit is all over the place. Ms. Yuli stated that appraisals on each unit were not done and asked about the formula that determines the maximum resale price of each unit.

Mr. Trautner responded to Ms. Yuli stating that each unit has its own designation as very low, low or moderate. Mr. Trautner stated that the units can be the exact same size, same number of bedrooms, etc.; however the maximum resale price of each unit depends on how the unit was designated 30 years ago at the time the units were built.

Ms. Yuli asked if an owner signs the agreement to extend the affordability controls and accepts the $40,000 when will the unit owner receive the $40,000 from the township.

Mayor Buss stated that the $40,000 checks will be sent out in the first quarter to each unit owner who accepts the agreement to extend the affordability controls on their unit.

Eleanor Poyner, resident, stated that she is an original owner of her unit and has lived here for 30 years. Ms. Poyner spoke about having health concerns. Ms. Poyner stated that her deed does not state that she has to notify the township if she intends to sell her unit at market rate after 30 years when the affordability controls have expired. Ms. Poyner stated that the deed states that if she sells her unit at market rate, she must pay the recapture fee of 50% to the township. Ms. Poyner spoke about renovating her unit and stated that she sent picture of her renovations to Mr. Trautner. Ms. Poyner stated that she bought her unit as a low income unit and the letter she received from Mr. Trautner states that her unit is a moderate unit. Ms. Poyner asked about the maximum resale price offered to her in the letter received from Mr. Trautner and accepting the $40,000 offer from the township to extend the affordability controls.

Mayor Buss responded to Ms. Poyner stating that owner-occupied unit owners can choose to stay in their units and not sell or accept the $40,000 to extend the affordability controls; they can accept the $40,000 and extend the affordability controls and then sell their unit for the maximum resale price or continue to live in the unit, or they can choose to sell the unit to the township who will then sell the unit to an income qualified individual or family.

Mr. Trautner responded stating that if a unit owner wishes to sell their unit to the township, the unit owner will submit an intent to sell form to the township. The township will then send a purchase and sale agreement, which will outline the maximum sale price.

Jeffrey Cook, resident, asked if there is a specific number out of the 66 owner-occupied units that the township is hoping to extend the affordability controls on.

Committeeman Buzzetta responded to Mr. Cook stating that the offer to extend the affordability controls is voluntary and ideally the township would love for all 66 owner-occupied units to extend the controls.

Mr. Cook asked if the township will have the requirement of building more affordable units if all 66 units do not extend the affordability controls.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded stating that the 66 owner-occupied units will not satisfy the township's obligation 100%.

Mr. Cook spoke about the affordability controls expiring therefore the unit is not an affordable unit any longer.

Mr. Trautner responded stating that the unit is technically still an affordable unit until one of three things happens; the owner resigns the unit and extends the controls, the owner intends to sell the unit and the township chooses not to exercise the right of first refusal or the owner sells the unit to the township.

Trautner – it is technically affordable until one of 3 things happens. The owner resigns the unit and extends the controls, the owner intends to sell and the town does not exercise the right of first refusal or the owner sells and the town exercises the right of first refusal and buys the unit.

Michael Taylor, resident, asked how many people are currently on the waiting list for an affordable unit.

Mayor Buss stated that Colts Neck is in Region 4 which is Monmouth County, Mercer County and Ocean County. Mayor Buss stated that there are thousands of people on the waiting list, which some of those people have been on the waiting list for several years.

Melinda Martin, resident, asked is the 30 year expiration date a recommendation or a mandate and does the town have the option of making that in perpetuity.

Mayor Buss responded stating that the township does not choose the expiration date, the state chooses. Mayor Buss stated for newly built units the affordability controls are deed restricted for 45 years.

7. Old Business

a. **Second Reading/Public Hearing:** Ordinance 2025-22: Ordinance approving and authorizing the tax agreement by and between Colts Neck Township and Grande Condo Portfolio, LLC for the preservation of affordable housing located at The Grande, Colts Neck

Mayor Buss read the ordinance by title for second reading/public hearing. Mayor Buss called for comments. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that this ordinance memorializes the Pilot program for the 14 units the township purchased in The Grande. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Buss called for a motion to open the public hearing. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was opened.

Hearing no comments and/or questions from the public, Mayor Buss called for a motion to close the public hearing. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeeman Buzzetta and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was closed. Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a majority roll call vote, the ordinance was adopted. Mayor Buss abstained.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Torchia Buss				X	
Deputy Mayor Viola	M	X			
Buzzetta		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
Rizzuto		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

8. New business

a. Consent Agenda

All items listed on the "Consent Agenda" are considered routine by the Township and are adopted or approved collectively by a single motion and roll-call vote of a majority of the Township Committee. If discussion is desired on any item, it is considered separately.

a. Resolution 2025-174: Resolution for renewal of membership in the Mid Jersey Municipal Joint Insurance Fund

b. Resolution 2025-175: A resolution to affirm Colts Neck Township's Civil Rights Policy with respect to all officials, appointees, employees, prospective employees, volunteers, independent contractors, and members of the public that come into contact with municipal employees, officials and volunteers

c. Resolution 2025-176: Resolution adopting the Colts Neck Township personnel policies and procedures manual, employee handbook, and volunteer handbook

d. Resolution 2025-177: Resolution recognizing tenure for the Administrator of the Colts Neck Township Municipal Court

e. Resolution 2025-178: Authorizing the purchase of a John Deere Gator for the Department of Public Works, Sourcewell Cooperative# 112624, $13,777.14

f. Resolution 2025-179: Authorizing the purchase of a spreader mounted on a roll off for the Department of Public Works, ESCNJ Cooperative Contract# 2324-04, $71,500.00

g. Resolution 2025-180: Authorizing the purchase of a 15-year carbon-wrapped cylinder & valve assembly (Scott Air Pack) for the Colts Neck Fire Department, N.J. State Contract# 24-FLEET-61850, $92,324.96

h. Resolution 2025-181: Resolution adopting the Emergency Operations Plan and authorizing continued participation in the Monmouth County Intra-County Mutual Aid Assistance Agreement between Monmouth County, Colts Neck Township and participating units

i. Resolution 2025-182: Accepting the resignation of Township Employee, Trina Lindsey

j. Resolution 2025-183: Authorizing execution of an agreement with Piazza & Associates, Inc. for affordable housing administration support services

k. Resolution 2025-184: Resolution supporting the submission of a grant application to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for a Recreation Program and Improvements Grant

Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous roll call vote, the consent agenda resolutions were adopted. Committeeman Rizzuto and Committeeman Buzzetta abstain from Resolution 2025-180. Mayor Buss abstains from Resolution 2025-177.

RECORD OF VOTE					
	M S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Torchia Buss		X		X	
Deputy Mayor Viola	S	X			
Buzzetta		X		X	
Fitzpatrick	M	X			
Rizzuto		X		X	
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

b. Approval of Vouchers

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he reviewed all of the vouchers and found all to be in order.

Deputy Mayor Viola made a motion to approve the bills list.

Mayor Buss called for a second to his motion, seconded by Committeeman Rizzuto and a unanimous roll call vote, the bills list was approved.

RECORD OF VOTE

	M	S	Yes	No	NV	Ab
Mayor Torchia Buss			X			
Deputy Mayor Viola	M		X			
Buzzetta			X			
Fitzpatrick			X			
Rizzuto		S	X			

M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent

Committeeman Buzzetta recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with the Colts Neck Fire Department.

Committeeman Rizzuto recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with the Colts Neck Fire Department.

Deputy Mayor Viola recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with Best Horticultural, Joleen Landscaping and Bucks Tree Service.

Mayor Buss recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with the Municipal Court.

c. Administrator's Report
Administrator Capristo thanked Municipal Clerk Lindsey for her years of service to Colts Neck Township. The Governing Body echoed the sentiment and wished Ms. Lindsey success in her new endeavors.

Ms. Lindsey commented that she has enjoyed working with everyone in Colts Neck Township and has thoroughly enjoyed working for and with Administrator Capristo and Attorney Bennett.

d. Township Committee Reports

Committeeman Buzzetta:

- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he attended the Board of Education meeting. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the President expressed her concerns in regards to affordable housing, as well as other Board of Education board members. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that there were comments about Colts Neck not joining the lawsuit with Montvale and other towns. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the lawsuit was dismissed by a State Judge, and the federal lawsuit is still pending. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the Township Committee did not feel joining that lawsuit would be a useful way to spend taxpayer money. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that if the lawsuit is successful all towns will benefit from that.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he was unable to attend the Senior Citizen's luncheon, there were 91 people in attendance.
- Committeeman Buzzetta reported on crime from the Police Department's monthly report stating that for September there was 1 assault, 2 burglaries, 0 motor vehicle thefts and 0 robberies.

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick:

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she attended the Colts Neck Business Association's 16th annual pig roast at Huddy's Inn. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that their next general meeting will be November 18, 2025 at Huddy's Inn which will also be the election for the 2026 Executive Board.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she attended the Trunk or Treat at Bucks Mill Park where the CNBA presented donation checks to the three volunteer first responder organizations in Colts Neck; the Fire Department, the First Aid Squad and the Fire Police. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that there were some amazingly decorated trunks at the event.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she attended the Historic Preservation Committee's Haunted Hayride at Fire Company #1. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she loved the decorations and the set up which was very festive. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she especially enjoyed the children's

costumes, especially the child who was wearing the monopoly character with the monopoly board around him.

Committeeman Rizzuto:

- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the Office of Emergency Management is still planning for a drill and the emergency operation plan is completed.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that Long Range Planning Committee did not meet.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the first responders have had a busy few weeks with accidents and asked everyone to keep them in their thoughts as they respond to these calls.
- Committeeman Rizzuto reminded residents that as it begins getting darker earlier in the evening to keep their exterior lights on, take their key fabs inside their homes and place them in a location that is not close to the door or a garage.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he missed Trunk or Treat due to work, but did attend the Haunted Hayride festivities at Fire Company #1. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the event was highly attended.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the township has formed a 250th America's Birthday Committee to participate in the Monmouth County celebrations.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that Country Christmas will be held on December 7, 2025 at the Montrose School from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that there will be a rededication ceremony held for the Brock family to rededicate the plaque for Eddie Brock's grandson, as well as a dedication for Lillian Burry on December 8, 2025.

Deputy Mayor Viola:

- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Department of Public Works completed fall brush pick and has begun the first two leaf pick ups. Deputy Mayor Viola spoke about a third leaf pick, however, residents must call by the cut off date to get on the list.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that capital road projects are underway, whatever is not completed before the weather gets too cold will be completed in the spring.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he attended the Trunk or Treat at Bucks Mill which was a very nice event.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he also attended the haunted hayride festivities at Fire Company #1 which was very well attended.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he will be attending the Veteran's Day celebration at Cedar Drive Middle School.
- Deputy Mayor Viola urged residents to submit a Citizen Leadership form if they are interested in volunteering on one of the boards, committees and commissions.

Mayor Buss:

- Mayor Buss stated that she hosted a Girl Scout Troop at Town Hall and with the Police Department and spoke about the Police Department doing a phenomenal job.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Department of Public Works hosted a Touch a Truck event at the Library which was very well attended.
- Mayor Buss spoke about the government shut down stating that the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) have started a food drive for the food panty at Naval Weapons Station Earle. Mayor Buss stated that the General Store is a donation drop off site and the items will be brought to Naval Weapons Station Earle as they come in if anyone is interested in donating.
- Mayor Buss stated that she left Citizen Leadership forms in the back of the meeting room for anyone who is interested in volunteering for any of the boards, committees and commissions.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Fire Department is hosting Breakfast with Santa on December 6th and December 7th at Fire Company #2 on Conover Road.
- Mayor Buss stated that there is a survey on the township website that is from the NJDEP. Mayor Buss stated that the public survey is on forever chemicals and aims to collect as much data as possible to create targeted and intentional educational and outreach materials.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners is happy to partner with JCP&L to host as series of in-person information sessions aimed at educating residents about energy assistance programs available to them.

9. **Public Comment:**

Mayor Buss called for a motion to open public comments. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeeman Buzzetta and a unanimous voice vote, public comment was opened.

Kevin O'Brien, resident, spoke about the township not adhering to Jake's Law in the application submitted to Green Acres. Mr. O'Brien spoke about special needs children and why the township did not include those families and ask for their input in connection with Five Points Park. Mr. O'Brien stated that Colts Neck needs to redo the bathroom plans to include family style restrooms. Mr. O'Brien stated that when the bids for the bathroom facility came in at $1.3 million dollars, Deputy Mayor Viola attempted to justify the project. Mr. O'Brien stated that the porta johns cost approximately $29,000 a year for all of the parks. Mr. O'Brien stated that the public hearing for the bathroom project was never posted on the township website.

Mayor Buss responded stating that the township has a fairly good relationship with the Board of Education and would be happy to discuss park projects with them.

Michael Taylor, resident, asked what services Piazza & Associates will provide and referenced Resolution 2025-183.

Administrator Capristo responded stating that Tim Anfuso is the Administrative Agent for Affordable Housing, and stated that only someone who is certified can review those applications for income verification and qualification. Administrator Capristo explained that the township is retaining Piazza & Associates while Tim is out on medical leave.

Dine Rinaldi, resident, stated that she read something about Well Spring Farm and the proposed development on that property and asked if anything is happening on that property. Ms. Rinaldi stated that she is very concerned for traffic on Route 537.

Mayor Buss responded explaining the objector to the Round IV affordable housing plan. Mayor Buss spoke about the letter that Naval Weapons Station Earle submitted objecting to the proposed plan to build units at this location due to it not being compatible space for high density housing due to its location in the military influence zone.

As there were no further comments and/or questions from the public, Mayor Buss called for a motion to close public comment. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous voice vote, public comment was closed.

10. **Adjournment:**

As there was no further business, Mayor Buss called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola seconded by Committeeman Rizzuto and a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Kathleen Capristo, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: November 12, 2025