COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 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 September 24, 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 September 16, 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 2025-162:** Executive Session – Potential Litigation

   Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick 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		X			
Buzzetta		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
Rizzuto	M	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 Deputy Mayor Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick, and a unanimous voice vote, the Governing Body was back in open session at 7:07 p.m.

   Mayor Buss asked for a moment of silence, stating that our country and town have had a lot of loss lately.

6. **Proclamation**

   a. Knock out Opioid Abuse Day, October 6, 2025

   Mayor Buss read the proclamation and held it to present it to Anita Dedalis, Prevention Alliance who was unable to attend.

7. Minutes

a. September 10, 2025 – Executive Session
b. September 10, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Mayor Buss called for comments, corrections or additions to the minutes. Hearing none, Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a majority voice vote, the minutes were approved. Mayor Buss abstained.

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

8. Old Business

a. Ordinance 2025-21: An ordinance amending the emergency services volunteer Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) in Colts Neck Township to permit cost of living adjustments in the amount of Township contributions

Mayor Buss commented that our emergency services is 100% volunteer.

Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola and a majority roll call vote the ordinance was adopted. Committeeman Rizzuto and Committeeman Buzzetta abstained.

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

9. New business

a. Resolution 2025-163: Resolution authorizing extension of affordability controls on 14 rental units at The Grande

Mayor Buss called for comments. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that Round IV allowed for a continuation or extension of affordability controls on previous owner-occupied units an affordable rental units are eligible to extend for Round IV credit. Deputy Mayor Viola explained that rental credits are 1.5 credits per 1 unit for rental units and owner-occupied units are 1 for 1. Deputy Mayor Viola explained that if an owner-occupied unit intends to sell, they must first notify the township so that the township can exercise right of first refusal to purchase the unit. Deputy Mayor Viola spoke about the agreement with the owner of the rental units stating that the township reached an agreement on 14 of those units which will give the township 21 credits towards the Round IV obligation. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Township has 23 credits currently which eliminates 115 new units. Deputy Mayor Viola spoke about the pilot and meeting with the Board of Education. The Governing Body has decided to give all

of the pilot to the school which increases their income by 15% from the preserved rentals. Deputy Mayor Viola thanked Committeeman Buzzetta who was very instrumental with negotiating with the owner of the rental units. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that since he has been on the committee the Governing Body promised to do everything possible to extend affordability controls which we are now delivering on that promise. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that there are 66 owner-occupied units that the Governing Body will be turning their attention to now. Hearing no further comments, 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 recused.

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					

b. Resolution 2025-164: Resolution requesting the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners to formally name and dedicate the Colts Neck Circle as the Lillian G. Burry Memorial Circle

Mayor Buss called for comments. Mayor Buss commented that Lillian Burry was an icon in Colts Neck. Mayor Buss stated that Lillian was one of the reasons she became involved with volunteering in the town, stating she gave so much of her time, talents and efforts. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she hopes the County will move forward with naming the circle after her. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she was not only very active in Colts Neck, but she was also very active in the County as well. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous roll call vote the ordinance was adopted.

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

c. 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 2025-165: Authorizing the release of unexpended escrow funds, inspection fees plus any accrued interest for 16 Crusius Place, Block 24, Lot 5, PB731

b. Resolution 2025-166: A resolution of Colts Neck Township adopting the Monmouth County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026

c. Resolution 2025-167: Authorizing award of contract for use of township property for agricultural purposes

d. Resolution 2025-168: Resolution appointing members of the Colts Neck Township 250th Committee

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.

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

d. Approval of Vouchers

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he reviewed all of the vouchers and found all to be in order. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that $106,000 of the bills list was for an insurance premium.

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

Mayor Buss called for a second to his motion, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick 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	S	X			
Rizzuto		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.

e. Administrator's Report
Administrator Capristo stated that repairs to the new municipal building have been completed and the Police Department employees who were temporarily displaced have moved back in. Administrator Capristo stated that the repairs went relatively smoothly, and final accounting will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

Administrator Capristo also stated that the JIF requires that the township's policies and procedures manual be updated every two years. Administrator Capristo stated that the changes will be presented to the personnel committee and then to the Township Committee for final approval.

f. Township Committee Reports

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick:

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the 9/11 memorial service last week was quite moving. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick thanked Anita and Emory Dedalis for taking care of the benches at the memorial site.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Environmental Commission posted Autumn fire tips on the township website.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she is looking forward to working with the 250th Independence Day Anniversary Committee and making it a year of celebration for Colts Neck, not only the Crossroads of Monmouth County, but the Crossroads of the Revolution. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that they are looking to have an introductory meeting of the committee in early November. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick told everyone to mark their calendars for February 22, 2026 for a special event at Colts Neck Inn in honor of George Washington's birthday.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Coffee with a Cop is coming up on October 1, 2025, at Delicious Orchards and is always a great event.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick urged residents to sign up for news and notices on the township website to keep up to date with current events and information in the township.

Committeeman Buzzetta:

- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the Senior Citizen's club is up to 282 members, approximately 90 or so members join the monthly luncheon. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the trip this month is to see Never Too Late at the Hunterdon Hills House. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that free flu shots will be offered to the seniors at their October 1st meeting.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the attended the Recreation Committee meeting, fall activities are underway. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that we wrapped up the summer concert series with twelve concerts planned and only two cancellations due to weather.
- Committeeman Buzzetta read statistics from the monthly police report stating that there were no burglaries, no robberies and only one larceny. Committeeman Buzzetta reminded residents to have lighting on their properties as it begins getting darker earlier in the evening. Committeeman Buzzetta also reminded residents to lock their doors and do not leave key fobs in their vehicles.
- Committeeman Buzzetta spoke about the lawsuits against fair share housing that were brought on by other towns. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he will report back to the residents when decisions from the court are made. Committeeman Buzzetta also stated that there are sixteen (16) towns who are in jeopardy of losing their immunity and zoning rights.

Committeeman Rizzuto:

- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is compliant with the state for the five-year emergency plan.
- Committeeman Rizzuto commended the Police Department, Fire Department and the First Aid Squad who have dealt with very serious accidents lately.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that Coffee with a Cop is scheduled for October 1st at 10:00 a.m. at Delicious Orchards.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the Historic Preservation Committee pulled the oil tank from behind the Montrose School which tested fine and went without incident. Committeeman Rizzuto spoke about the foundation issues with the Montrose School and stated that the HPC will be looking into funding opportunities and grant opportunities. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that some events coming up are the Betsy Ross reenactor is scheduled to be at the Primary School on October 9, 2025, the Haunted Hayride is scheduled for October 25, 2025 at Fire Company #1 from 5:00 p.m – 8:00 p.m. with a rain date of October 26, 2025, and Country Christmas is scheduled for December 7, 2025 from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Montrose School. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that there will also be a rededication ceremony for Eddie Brock's grandson at Montrose School.

Deputy Mayor Viola:

- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he was honored to fill in for the mayor at the 9/11 memorial ceremony, which was well attended. Deputy Mayor Viola thanked the Police Department, Fire Department, First Aid Squad and recreation for their efforts to make the ceremony a great event.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the brush pick up will commence on October 6, 2025, in Zone 1 and leaf pick up will begin in Zone 1 on October 20, 2025. Deputy Mayor Viola reminded residents that the Department of Public Works offers a final leaf pick up once all passages have been made throughout all of the zones. In order to have this final leaf pick up, you must call the Department of Public Works by 3:00 p.m. on December 4, 2025. No late exceptions are made.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the repairs to the steps at Town Hall Annex are going well.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the shredding event was very active, and the trucks were filled by 12:15 p.m.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Capital Road Improvement Project is underway, and curbs are being worked on now.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Governing Body is turning their attention to the owner-occupied units at The Grande and told residents that if they know anyone who would like to maintain the affordability controls on their units to let them know they should be expecting letters in the mail very soon.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that Beth McManus will be at the October 14, 2025, Planning Board meeting and will make an informal presentation regarding the Round IV obligation and plan.

Mayor Buss:

- Mayor Buss stated that she put forms in the back of the meeting room for anyone interested in regard to the upcoming book sale for the Friends of the Library and also Citizen Leadership forms for anyone interested in serving on one of the volunteer boards for the township.
- Mayor Buss spoke about a grant from the state for $200,000 that is not a matching grant. Mayor Buss stated that the township will be working on how those funds can be used to enhance recreational facilities.
- Mayor Buss stated that she received a request from a resident asking the township to address cottage food operator licenses. Mayor Buss stated that she thinks this should go to the Long-Range Planning Committee for review. Mayor Buss stated that the State of NJ allows cottage food operator licenses and municipalities have the ability to adopt an ordinance and put restrictions as well as enhance what the state has approved. Mayor Buss stated that the Borough of Dunellen recently adopted an ordinance restricting the number of people that can come to a person's house. Mayor Buss stated that Holmdel Township is restricting sales from a person's home. The Governing Body unanimously agreed to have the Long-Range Planning Committee review a possible ordinance. Mayor Bus also spoke about an ordinance for tree removal permit applications. Mayor Buss stated that she has received questions from residents asking why Colts Neck does not have a permitting process for tree removal on private property. Mayor Buss stated that in some towns if you remove a tree you have to plant another tree elsewhere. The Governing Body agreed to have the Long-Range Planning Committee review this as well.

10. <u>Public Comment:</u>

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.

Tina Rose Yuli, resident, asked if the letters that the owner-occupied units will receive have contact information on them for anyone who has questions or who would like to discuss their options. Ms. Yuli also asked when the town purchases a unit back, what is the purchase price.

Deputy Mayor Viola responded to Ms. Yuli stating that there will be contact information in the letters. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the letters will also list the maximum restricted price for each unit, which is also specific to each unit.

Anthony Ursino, resident, reviewed a 14-page letter and gave the docket number of the document. Mr. Ursino had questions regarding this document.

Committeeman Buzzetta responded stating that the township submitted the plan for the Round IV obligation on June 30, 2025. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that there is a 60-day period for objectors to submit any objections to the plan. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that in early September the township received notification of three (3) objectors to the Round IV plan. Committeeman Buzzetta explained that those objectors are Fair Share Housing and two developers. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that one developer who has objected to the plan wants to develop the Well Spring Farm on Route 537 and develop 400 units. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the other developer would like to develop units at 68 Obre Road. Committeeman Buzzetta spoke about an issue of being within 3,000 ft of Naval Weapons Station Earle and stated that the township has plans to object and fight back on each of these objections.

Joyce Costa, resident, asked if the Well Springs Farm is subdivided stating that she does not remember it being sold as a subdivided piece of land. Ms. Costa asked if the family who sold that land years ago can come back and sue the township for rezoning it and making it buildable.

Mayor Buss stated that she thought the same thing years ago prior to becoming involved on various boards and now the Township Committee. Mayor Buss spoke about 10-acre zoning and not being able to build on properties such as this, however, in the name of affordable housing towns can be forced to rezone and allow high density developments.

Melinda Martin, resident, stated that she found out from a friend of hers that Aberdeen Township has initiated a program that Colts Neck may find beneficial. Ms. Martin explained that as an extension of Coffee with a Cop, the Police Department concentrates on fraud and scams. Ms. Martin stated that there are probably many more people that would benefit from hearing a police officer's perspective on current fraud and scam schemes.

Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the Senior Citizen Club has had an officer come to their luncheon meetings and speak to the seniors about fraud and scam schemes. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that perhaps the township committee can look into having an officer attend a township committee meeting as well.

Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he does not agree that township committee meetings are the correct forum for that discussion, but he will discuss different options with the Chief of Police.

Marianne Cucolo, resident, asked if the recapture fund courtesy was going to be extended to the owner-occupied units as it was extended to the owner of the rental units. Ms. Cucolo also asked about the pilot program asking how many years that program is for.

Deputy Mayor Viola responded, stating that the pilot program is a total of 30 years and would be distributed entirely to the Colts Neck Board of Education and will eliminate five taxing entities. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the recapture relief for the eight (8) units that the rental unit owner can sell will not be extended to the owner-occupied units as that was part of the negotiating deal for the township to maintain affordability controls on the fourteen (14) units agreed upon.

Ms. Cucolo asked where the remediation took place in the new municipal building. Administrator Capristo responded, stating that it was in the area of the sewerage damage, a company was hired to remediate the damage.

Linda Martin, resident, asked why there was a 30-year cap on the affordable housing units and asked if that would be the case with the Kushner development and also asked if the affordability controls can be permanent.

Mayor Buss responded that the State of New Jersey required a 30-year recapture time. Mayor Buss explained that in the new legislation, the lowest restriction the town can get is a 30-year restriction and then a 40-year restriction for the next round of controls.

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 Committeeman Buzzetta and a unanimous voice vote, public comment was closed.

11. <u>Adjournment</u>:

As there was no further business, Mayor Buss called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Trina Lindsey, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: 10/08/25