COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 9, 2025, 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

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1. Mayor Buss called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 July 9, 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."

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 2025-133: Confirming appointment of Probationary Police Officer, Meghan N. Radich

   Mayor Buss announced that Resolution 2025-133 would be moved from the Consent agenda to the Regular agenda. Mayor Buss made a few comments congratulating Meghan on becoming a probationary police officer. Mayor Buss stated that the current Chief of Police, Daniel DeVito and the prior Chief of Police, Paul Santucci, have brought the Police Department where it is today.

   Mayor Buss called for comments. All of the Governing Body members congratulated Meghan and wished her much success in her new career as a Police Officer. 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 resolution was adopted.

   Chief DeVito made a few comments thanking the Township Committee and Administrator Capristo for their continued support of the Police Department. Chief DeVito stated that he formerly supervised Meghan in her role as Records Clerk when he was Lieutenant. Chief DeVito stated that Meghan always goes above and beyond. Chief DeVito stated that Meghan was the top candidate out of all of the candidates when interviewing for the position of Probationary Police Officer. Chief DeVito stated that he is very excited for Meghan's future and welcomes her aboard.

   Mayor Buss administered the oath of office for Meghan Radich.

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					

6. Minutes

a. June 25, 2025 – Regular meeting

Mayor Buss called for comments or changes to the minutes. Hearing none, Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous voice vote, the minutes were approved as presented.

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					

7. Discussion Item(s) – Tim Anfuso

a. Draft Refuse Containers/Dumpsters Ordinance

Township Planner, Tim Anfuso, stated that this ordinance amendment states that if a resident has an active building permit, they may place a refuge container/dumpster in the driveway or front yard, but not in the street.

Mayor Buss asked if a moving pod would fall into the same category for this ordinance amendment. Mr. Anfuso responded yes, moving pods are considered accessory structures.

Deputy Mayor Viola asked what a resident does if they are clearing out their basement and require a refuge container/dumpster and they do not have a building permit. Mr. Anfuso stated that the refuge container/dumpster would have to be located in the rear yard.

b. Draft Dogs on Active Recreation Fields Ordinance

Mr. Anfuso explained that the township is experiencing an issue with people using the baseball fields for their dogs' private runs. Mr. Anfuso stated that this ordinance amendment prohibits allowing dogs on active playing fields delineated by markers including baseball, soccer, football, tennis and pickleball. Mr. Anfuso stated that dogs must be in designated areas for animals or actively under control.

c. Draft Riparian Buffer Easement Ordinance

Mr. Anfuso stated that this amendment is to protect riparian buffers along Category 1 streams. Mr. Anfuso stated that the Township has sought to preserve riparian buffers in Conservation, Open Space, Drainage and Utility right-of-way easements. (C.O.D.U. easements). Mr. Anfuso stated that recently questions have arisen regarding partial releases of C.O.D.U. easements for new structures for things such as fences, etc., and the applicability of the New Jersey Conservation Restriction and Historic Preservation Restriction Act. The Green Acres Program has advised that the Township ordinance governing C.O.D.U. easements is quite flexible and allows the Township Committee and/or Planning Board to make changes to the approved plans and does not appear to limit that approved plan to a specific date. The Green Acres Program has advised that partial releases to C.O.D.U. easements established by filing a Final Plat in the County Clerk's office do not rise to the level of a release requiring DEP Commissioner approval. Mr. Anfuso stated that, however, the Green Acres Program has indicated that C.O.D.U. easements created by Deed are tied to a dated approved plan, therefore C.O.DU. easements created by Deed require DEP Commissioner approval. Mr. Anfuso stated that to avoid confusion, the draft ordinance establishes a new easement entitled "Riparian Buffer

Easement". This riparian buffer easement contains many of the same purposes as the C.O.D.U. easement and is intended to protect riparian buffers.

d. Draft Nonresidential Performance Standards Ordinance

Mr. Anfuso stated that this draft ordinance amendment governs the nature of non-residential buildings and structures in the Business District. Mr. Anfuso explained that the Long-Range Planning Committee has developed these nonresidential building and structure performance standards to regulate the design elements of nonresidential buildings. Mr. Anfuso stated that the standards aim to ensure buildings are esthetically pleasing, durable and integrated with the surrounding environment. Mr. Anfuso reviewed the following major requirements of the draft ordinance:

- Building orientation and entrance must face parallel to Route 34 and the Highway Management Access Road
- Building façades must consist of at least 80% of durable class 1 materials (brick, natural stone, wood clapboard) or class 2 (split face block, veneer brick, manufactured stone) materials
- Class 3 materials (fiber cement board, metal panels, EIFS) and Class 4 materials (vinyl siding, smooth concrete block, glass block, wood) cannot comprise more than 20% of the building façade
- Building design must incorporate an identifiable base, midsection and top
- Buildings must be embellished with a minimum of three elements to enhance aesthetic appeal (cornices, corner board, quoins, porticos, recessed entrances, window surrounds)
- Façade lengths greater than 40 feet must integrate projections, porches, or other elements to avoid monotony
- Retail store fronts must include at least three designated features (cornice, sign band, transom, bulkhead, recessed entry, pilaster)
- Exterior lighting must be directed downward with a solid top
- Refuse containers must be enclosed and screened with materials matching the principal building
- Developments with ten or more businesses must include public art or public spaces

Deputy Mayor Viola asked if this would be consistent with what the township did for the overlay zone. Mr. Anfuso responded, stating that these standards will apply to the overlay zone.

Mayor Buss stated that she appreciates all of the work the Long-Range Planning Committee and Mr. Anfuso put into these ordinances.

8. Old Business

a. **Second Reading/Public Hearing:** Ordinance 2025-12: An ordinance amending Chapter 222 of the code of Colts Neck Township entitled "Vehicles and Traffic"

Mayor Buss read the ordinance by title for second reading/public hearing. Mayor Buss called for comments. Administrator Capristo stated that this ordinance amendment is to add Clover Hill Lane to prohibit parking on either side of the road. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Buss called for a motion to open the public hearing. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola, seconded by Committeeman Buzzetta and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was opened.

Robert Sayko, resident, asked if this includes trucks used by landscapers. Administrator Capristo stated that there will be no parking on either side of the road at any time, therefore yes, it includes landscaping trucks as well.

Kevin O'Brien, resident, stated that he lives one street over from Clover Hill Lane and people use the side street on a regular basis. Mr. O'Brien stated that when cars are

parked on the road it is a challenge to get past them due to how narrow the road is. Mr. O'Brien stated that he thinks it's a great idea to prohibit parking on this street.

Hearing no further questions or comments from the public, Mayor Buss called for a motion to close the public hearing. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola, 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 Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick 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		X			
Buzzetta		X			
Fitzpatrick	S	X			
Rizzuto	M	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

b. **Second Reading/Public Hearing:** Ordinance 2025-13: Ordinance appropriating $275,700 from the Farmland Preservation Trust Fund for the acquisition of a conservation easement in and by Colts Neck Township, in the County of Monmouth, New Jersey

Mayor Buss read the ordinance by title for second reading/public hearing. Mayor Buss called for comments. Administrator Capristo stated that this is in reference to the Spinella Farm and represents Colts Neck's share in the preservation of the farm. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that 88 acres will be preserved. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Buss called for a motion to open the public hearing. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was opened. Hearing no questions or comments from the public, Mayor Buss called for a motion to close the public hearing. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick 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 unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was adopted.

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					

9. New business

a. **First Reading/Introduction:** Ordinance 2025-14: Ordinance authorizing the leasing of certain capital equipment by Colts Neck Township, New Jersey from the Monmouth County Improvement Authority and the execution of a lease agreement relating thereto

Mayor Buss read the ordinance by title for first reading/introduction. Mayor Buss called for comments. Deputy Mayor Viola and Administrator Capristo commented stating that there are certain budgeted capital items that qualify to utilize the MCIA, which offers better rates for funding. 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 unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was

approved for introduction. Mayor Buss stated that the public hearing is scheduled for August 13, 2025.

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. 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 2025-134: Confirming hiring of a full-time Records Clerk for the Colts Neck Police Department, Cassie Halpin

b. Resolution 2025-135: Authorizing award of contract FY2025 NJDOT Municipal Aid Program – Improvements to Montrose Road from Monmouth County Route 537 to Round Hill Court

c. Resolution 2025-136: Confirming hiring Colts Neck Township Laborer for the Department of Public Works, Philip Connell

d. Resolution 2025-137: Resolution authorizing execution of employment agreements for the Department of Public Works Mechanic, John Connell and Laborers Ryan Amato, Trevor Cutter, Jr. and Philip Connell

e. Resolution 2025-138: Authorizing summer camp program fee refund

Administrator Capristo stated that in regard to Resolution 2025-137, the employment agreement for Matthew Amoresano has been pulled as he is no longer with the Township.

Noting that change, Mayor Buss called for a motion to approve. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeeman Buzzetta 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		X			
Buzzetta	S	X			
Fitzpatrick		X			
Rizzuto	M	X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

f. Approval of Vouchers

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he reviewed all of the vouchers and found all to be in order. Deputy Mayor Viola noted that one check was reissued which was lost in the mail and never received by the vendor.

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

Mayor Buss called for a second to Deputy Mayor Viola's 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.
Mayor Buss recuses from any bills/vouchers in connection with the shared municipal court with Holmdel Township.

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

g. Administrator's Report
Administrator Capristo stated that a resident of Colts Neck is seeking approval from the Governing Body to consume alcohol in Bucks Mill Park for a private party on August 16, 2025, from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with approximately 75 guests. Administrator Capristo stated that all of the proper paperwork has been filed with the Recreation Department.

The Governing Body unanimously approves.

h. Township Committee Reports

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick:

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she hopes everyone enjoyed the 4th of July weekend, celebrating America's Independence.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Colts Neck Business Association's sponsored fireworks event on July 3, 2025, was well attended stating it was a wonderful community gathering that with the cooperation of many makes it a special event that goes smoothly. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that besides the many CNBA volunteers, the Colts Neck Police Department, volunteers from the Colts Neck Fire Department, Fire Police, and First Aid were on hand in case of any emergency and the Fire Police assisted with traffic. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick also recognized the hard work behind the scenes from the Recreation Director, Colby Marques and the Department of Public Works. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that this was the first time in ten years that she saw the weather interfere with the fireworks, however, there was a break in the rain and the company shot off a wonderful display. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that unfortunately the Colts Neck Community Band was unable to play because the rain would ruin their instruments. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick thanked the Schatzle family and the Women's Club for continuing the tradition of the apple pie contest which was named Grandma Charlotte's in honor of the founder of the contest, Charlotte Schatzle. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the winner was Katie Britton, and the runner up was Mary Pahira. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick also thanked Glen Dalakian of CSAV Systems for providing the sound system, the Colts Neck Sports Foundation for the use of their portable lights to light up the parking lot and to Ray Longobardi of Pebble Creek Golf Course for the use of his golf carts to help the first responders and our Fire Official, Phil Engel to get around the park.

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the summer concert series continues tomorrow night from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., pond-side at Town Hall with The Plaid Shirts playing country music.

Committeeman Buzzetta:

- Committeeman Buzzetta stated Recreation Committee will not have a meeting this month.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he is looking forward to the summer concert series concert tomorrow night.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he attended the Senior Citizen's Club luncheon and reported that the Senior Citizen's Club is up to 278 members currently.

Committeeman Rizzuto:

- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he met with the OEM Director and discussed digital radios and making sure everyone is on the same page.
- Committeeman Rizzuto congratulated Meghan Radich and wished her a safe career.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the Historic Preservation Committee continues to work on the planning for the Halloween Haunted Hayride event in October.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the First Aid is continuing with routine maintenance on the building.

Deputy Mayor Viola:

- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Public Works yard for brush drop off is back to its normal hours after extending the hours for storm related drop off.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that as the township reaches new strategy in regard to affordable housing it will be shared with the public.
- Deputy Mayor Viola thanked the CNBA, the Colts Neck Fire Department, the Fire Police, First Aid, and all of the other volunteers who made the July 3rd fireworks show possible.

Mayor Buss:

- Mayor Buss stated that the July 3rd fireworks was a wonderful event. Mayor Buss stated that she learned that once fireworks are set to go off, they cannot be reused. Mayor Buss stated that everyone did a wonderful job navigating the event and the weather.
- Mayor Buss stated that she was approached by a rising senior of the Colts Neck High School, Isabella McAllister who sent the mayor a request asking if the Township would consider a Youth Advisory group. Mayor Buss stated that Ms. McAllister is interested in forming a group that will empower young people and give them a voice in the community. Mayor Buss stated that affordable housing is one of the topics of interest to Ms. McAllister. Mayor Buss asked her fellow committee to give it some thought, stating that she feels it could add real value to the township.

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

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

Kevin O'Brien, resident, stated that during public comments some residents have made strong comments. Mr. O'Brien stated that the committee and the public do not always agree, stating that he does his homework before speaking and he looks at the facts. Mr. O'Brien stated that he does not remember ever hearing the Township Committee congratulate Mr. Tobia on winning the Primary Election. Mr. O'Brien opined on the request from the rising senior at Colts Neck High School stating that the students can come to the Township Committee meetings and participate in public comment. Mr. O'Brien stated that he feels the conversations that take place after the meeting in the hallway or the parking lot where the Township Committee members engage with members of the public should stop. Mr. O'Brien asked what the status of the golf tee box on Clover Hill Road is. Mr. O'Brien stated that reference was made about buying units in The Grande, Mr. O'Brien asked if those units will be bought at cost or below

cost and what budget does that affect. Mr. O'Brien asked about the bathroom facility at Five Points Park and the grant asking what the grant was for and was it used for the bathroom facility. Mr. O'Brien stated that porta Johns should be standard at the parks because with porta Johns you don't have to worry about septic issues.

Mayor Buss responded to Mr. O'Brien stating that she did have a conversation with Mr. Tobia and congratulated him in the hope of keeping the dialogue open. Mayor Buss responded to Mr. O'Brien in regard to purchasing units at The Grande stating that the rate for purchasing affordable units is set by the State. Mayor Buss stated that the township would sell that affordable unit to a qualified person on the affordable housing waitlist.

Administrator Capristo responded to Mr. O'Brien stating that the township did receive a grant for a bathroom and recreational building for Five Points Park. Administrator Capristo stated that the township went out to bid and the bids came in very high therefore it was the decision of the Governing Body to abandon the project a that time and work with the Sports Foundation on other options.

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the township received $200,000 in grant funds, the project was estimated to cost approximately $500,000 and the bids came in over $1 million dollars so the project was vacated.

Committeeman Buzzetta responded to Mr. O'Brien stating that he disagrees with Mr. O'Brien's statement that the township committee should not engage with residents after the meeting. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he encourages residents to reach out and speak with the Township Committee any time. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he echo's the Mayor's previous comments on decorum and how we treat each other. Committeeman Buzzetta noted a time in a Township Committee meeting where a resident turned his back while Deputy Mayor Viola was speaking and stated that is not the decorum that the Township Committee wants in the room.

Allan Ryan, resident, stated that the all volunteer Fire Department responded to 69 calls for the month of June. Mr. Ryan commented on the sacrifice that his fellow firefighters make stating that you can't put a price on it. Mr. Ryan stated that he is a very proud member of the Fire Department. Mr. Ryan spoke about the rising senior at Colts Neck High School and stated that he has done volunteer work at the high school and stated that the youth have very good questions and he thinks a youth committee is a good idea.

Bob Sayko, resident, stated that Town Hall and the Department of Public Works closed at Noon on July 3rd and stated that the Township should publish that a day or two ahead of time to inform the residents. Mr. Sayko stated that he ran into another resident in the parking lot who was furious that the building was closed. Mr. Sayko stated that he spoke with a lot of residents who were upset and if the Township Committee doesn't do something about it they won't be reelected. Mr. Sayko spoke about having to clean up storm damage brush at his home or having to pay someone to clean it up. Mr. Sayko spoke about being an aging senior and the difficulty in having to clean up storm related brush. Mr. Sayko stated that the township should be able to respond to things such as this.

Deputy Mayor Viola noted the request for earlier communication regarding an early closure at Town Hall and Public Works. Municipal Clerk Lindsey stated that all holiday closures are posted on the website calendar in the beginning of the year when determined by the Township Committee. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the storm was not significant enough to offer an extra brush pick up for the entire town. Deputy Mayor Viola spoke about having to pay a company to remove a tree from his yard.

Mr. Sayko asked what is the threshold for the town in the event of a storm and how the township determines if an extra pick up is warranted.

Administrator Capristo responded stating that she speaks with the professionals, that being the Department of Public Works and the Police Department to determine the extent of storm damage.

Jennifer Sakoutis, resident, stated that she has been a teacher for 15 years. Ms. Sakoutis asked if the township is able to reach out to the school for service hours for the kids in an event such as storm damage where the kids could obtain service hours for assisting residents with storm related cleanup. Ms. Sakoutis also spoke about offering affordable housing for the elderly. Ms. Sakoutis also spoke about offering career day for all grades in the schools.

Mayor Buss responded to Ms. Sakoutis and stated that she will speak with the Board of Education in regard to sharing more for career day. Mayor Buss also stated that senior housing is an option being explored for affordable housing.

Attorney, Meghan Bennett stated that many towns offer assistance from high school students for snow removal services for the elderly for service hours.

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 Deputy Mayor Viola seconded by Committeeman Rizzuto 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 Committeeman Rizzuto and a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Trina Lindsey, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: 08/13/25