COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 14, 2025, 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

---

1. Mayor Buss called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

3. Municipal Clerk Lindsey 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 May 14, 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 the Two River Times on May 12, 2025 noting the meeting time change from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 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, Committeeman Frank Rizzuto
Also Present:	Trina Lindsey, Municipal Clerk, and Meghan Bennett, Township Counsel
Absent:	Kathleen Capristo, Township Administrator

5. **Resolution 2025-97:** Executive session – Personnel and Potential Litigation

   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 resolution 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					

   After closed session, Mayor Buss called 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 Township Committee went back to open session at 7:01 p.m.

6. **Proclamation(s)**

   a. National Police Week, May 11, 2025 – May 17, 2025

   b. Mental Health Awareness Month within Colts Neck Township

   Committeeman Rizzuto read the proclamation for National Police Week, Lieutenant Mayer attended the meeting to accept the proclamation. Lt. Mayer thanked the Township Committee for their continued support of the Police Department.

Mayor Buss read the proclamation for Mental Health Awareness month and the Township Clerk will pass it along to Anita Dedalis, Prevention Alliance.

7. Minutes

a. April 30, 2025 – Executive session
b. April 30, 2025 – Regular meeting

Mayor Buss called for comments or changes to the minutes. Deputy Mayor Viola made a minor correction to page 3 of the minutes. 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 voice vote, the minutes were approved as presented.

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					

8. Discussion Item

a. O'Neil Partial Easement Release – Block 12, Lot 4.08, 6 Canby Drive

John O'Neill was present as the owner of 6 Canby Drive. Mr. O'Neill stated that he has applied for a permit with the Zoning Department to install a fence on his property. Mr. O'Neill explained that during the permit process he learned that there is an easement in the back right corner of the property. Mr. O'Neill explained that he is seeking relief to erect the fence in the easement, and will assume all financial responsibility of removal of the fence should the township need to access the easement.

The Governing Body unanimously granted the relief. Attorney Bennett will draft an agreement to be signed.

9. Old Business

a. Ordinance 2025-9: Ordinance amending Chapter 102 "Development regulations", § 106 "Signs" of the code of Colts Neck Township, County of Monmouth, and State of New Jersey

Mayor Buss read the ordinance by title for second reading/public hearing. Mayor Buss called for comments. Attorney Bennett stated that her office reviewed the sign ordinance. Attorney Bennett stated that language in the current ordinance in regards to political signs is not constitutional. Attorney Bennet explained that the amendment also put restrictions on event signs. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Buss called for a motion to open the public hearing. On a motion by Deputy Mayor Viola, seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was opened.

Kevin O'Brien, resident commented that the area of the ordinance that pertains to event signs seems overly broad. Attorney Bennett stated that it is overly broad on purpose because it is content neutral not content specific.

Mr. O'Brien stated that it has been conveyed in the public that the sign ordinance was amended to allow oversized political signs, however, Mr. O'Brien stated that he does not agree that is the case. Mr. O'Brien stated that it was also conveyed in the public that the sign ordinance will be amended back to what it previously stated after the election, however, Mr. O'Brien stated that he also does not believe that is what will happen. Mr. O'Brien stated that his personal issue is when political signs are not in

compliance with NJ Elections Law and it would be nice if the political signs came into compliance. Mr. O'Brien asked about garage sale signs on the weekends and asked if the police department will handle that. Attorney Bennett responded stating that yes, the police department has authority to police signs on the weekends. Attorney Bennett urged residents that if they see something they believe is not in compliance to fill out a report a concern or contact the Township Administrator. Mr. O'Brien also spoke about contractor signs throughout the township as well as A-frame signs for businesses and noted an old sun faded A-frame sign on Route 34 for Colts Neck Liquor. Mr. O'Brien spoke about the township possibly charging a permit for sign applications.

Robert Sayko, resident, asked if the ordinance covers the size of signs. Mayor Buss responded stating that signs are not to exceed 32 sq. ft. Mr. Sayko asked if the ordinance addresses contractor signs on lawns and utility poles. Committeeman Rizzuto responded stating that signs being posted on utility poles is prohibited.

Hearing no further questions from the public, Mayor Buss called for a motion to close the public hearing. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was closed. Mayor Buss called for a motion by 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					

b. Ordinance 2025-10: Ordinance appropriating $2,343,868, $2,099,230 of which is from the Capital Improvement Fund and $244,638 of which is from a State of New Jersey Department of Transportation Grant, for various capital improvements 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. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that this is from pay as you go capital. 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 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 Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was closed. Mayor Buss called for a motion by approve. On a motion by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick, 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	M	X			
Rizzuto		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

c. Ordinance 2025-11: Bond ordinance providing for the acquisition of a fire truck in and by Colts Neck Township, in the County of Monmouth, New Jersey,

appropriating $2,510,000 therefor and authorizing the issuance of $2,384,500 bonds for notes of the township to finance part of the cost thereof

Mayor Buss read the ordinance by title for second reading/public hearing. Mayor Buss called for comments. Mayor Buss stated that we are very lucky in town to have our fire departments, this has been a long time coming to purchase a fire truck. Mayor Buss stated that she has requested that there is representation from both fire companies present during discussions involving the purchasing of the fire truck, also requested one person from the township committee also be involved, not necessarily her as the liaison, wanted to give the fire department the opportunity to choose. Mayor Buss stated that she also requested someone from Naval Weapons Station Earle's fire department. Mayor Buss stated that the purchase of this fire truck will be well thought out to get the best product. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the town got its monies worth out the old ladder truck, it is 25 years old, and the town has allocated monies to keep that truck certified until it no longer can be certified. 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.

Elaine Mann, resident, asked who will be on the subcommittee and if both fire companies have signed off on the purchase of the fire truck. Ms. Mann asked if the fire truck will be a yellow fire truck and stated that purchasing a yellow fire truck costs an additional $50,000. Ms. Mann asked if the new fire truck will fit in Fire Company #1's garage. Ms. Mann stated that she believes the public has a right to be concerned with this purchase stating that the residents do not want another financial disaster.

Mayor Buss responded stating that a fire truck has not been chosen yet and as mentioned previously, there will be representatives from both fire companies on the subcommittee.

Kevin O'Brien, resident, stated that number 90 red is the traditional standard color for fire trucks. Mr. O'Brien stated that spending an additional $50,000 for a yellow fire truck is not a smart choice. Mr. O'Brien asked if the Kushner developer will put any monies towards the purchase of the new fire truck.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded stating that the fire truck will be equipped to deal with the new development.

Mayor Buss stated again that a fire truck has not been chosen and the purchase of this truck is to replace an old fire truck and has nothing to do with the Kushner development.

David Mann, resident and life member of the fire company, stated that there are three ariel types of trucks and Mr. Mann explained the differences. Mr. Mann spoke about being able to back down driveways in town and stated that the subcommittee should keep that in mind when choosing a truck.

Alan Ryan, resident, stated that Fire Department #1 has yellow trucks and Fire Department #2 has red trucks and it has been that way for 30 years. Mr. Ryan stated that residents are arguing over the color of a fire truck when the bottom line reality is when someone is in trouble the fire department is there no matter what color the truck is. Mr. Ryan stated that he could not be more proud of the fire departments and the volunteers and reminded people to never forget their sacrifice.

Committeeman Buzzetta and Deputy Mayor Viola stated that they both agree with Mr. O'Brien and would not choose a yellow fire truck.

Hearing no further 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 Deputy Mayor Viola and a unanimous voice vote, the public hearing was closed. Mayor Buss called for a motion by approve. On a motion by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick, 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	M	X			
Rizzuto		X			
M - Moved S - Seconded X - indicates vote NV - Not Voting Ab - Absent					

10. New business

a. Resolution 2025-98: Resolution authorizing an emergency repairs of $15,068.00 for inlet repair at Glenwood Road

Mayor Buss called for comments. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Township Engineer identified inlet repairs that need to take place on Glenwood Road and this resolution is for those repairs. Hearing no further comments, 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 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					

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 2025-99: Authorizing the release of a performance guarantee, a cash performance guarantee and inspection fee with accrued interest for Elina Garber and accepting substitute guarantees by Marc Samit for Block 29, Lot 10.05 – 2 Bluebell Road – ZB958

b. Resolution 2025-100: Resolution authorizing amendments to the Colts Neck Township Police Department's Rules and Regulations General Order

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 consent agenda resolutions were 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					

c. Approval of Vouchers

Deputy Mayor Viola stated that he reviewed all of the vouchers and found all to be in order. Spoke about five line items which were various taxes such library tax, Board of Education, Freehold Regional, etc.

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

Committeeman Buzzetta 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 and Joleen Landscaping.

d. Administrator's Report
None

e. Township Committee Reports

Committeeman Buzzetta:

- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he attended the Board of Education meeting and the BOE approved their budget. Committeeman Buzzetta spoke about the tax levy for the BOE being essentially flat and congratulated the BOE for their efforts. Committeeman Buzzetta spoke about tax bill stating that school tax is approximately 44% of the total tax bill. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the approved school budget is on the Board of Education website and urged residents to review the budget.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he attended the Sports Foundation meeting and all spring leagues are underway and doing well. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that flag football with have their championship game on May 31, 2025.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he attended the Senior Citizen's Club luncheon which was very well attended and the Seniors have some exciting trips planned.

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick:

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Farmland and Open Space Committee met. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that as she mentioned previously the US Navy has earmarked $3 million dollars for preservation along their buffer zone, and the committee is in the process of adding 80 acres to the township's preserved properties. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that if anyone knows of anyone in town who may be interested in preserving their land, she would be more than happy to speak with them.

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Long Range Planning's meeting scheduled for last night was cancelled.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Township Committee attended the Lion's Club Kentucky Derby event. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that it was a wonderful event to raise money for their charity work to maintain their playground for disabled children and to provide eye glasses and eye screening for the needy.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Township Committee joined the Colts Neck Business Association (CNBA) in formally welcoming Via Sposito to Colts Neck with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that it was quite the celebration and they had a great crowd.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she attended the Woman's Club meeting last Thursday where they inducted five new members and discussed plans for decorating their wagon for the Memorial Day parade. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick expressed her gratitude for all the Women's Club members do for the community. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Women's Club has received donations to replace their bench that was vandalized.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the township is preparing for Memorial Day and the parade. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that she is looking forward to honoring our fallen soldiers who sacrificed everything for the love of their country. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Monday, May 26, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. the parade will begin at Town Hall and go to Memorial Park for the ceremony and then continue to Fire Company #2 on Conover Road for hot dogs and root beer.

Committeeman Rizzuto:

- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he spoke with Tyler Badaracco, OEM Coordinator and they are continuing their work on the five-year plan.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he attended the Planning Board meeting last night and there were only three people in the audience.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the Historic Preservation Committee will have a reenactor, Thomas Jefferson at the Cedar Drive Middle School tomorrow. Committeeman Rizzuto also spoke about the Halloween event at Fire Company #1 hosted by the Historic Preservation Committee, which will take place on October 25, 2025, same day as Trunk or Treat. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that they are both great events and both well attended. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the committee will be installing a historic marker for Eastmont Orchards and is working on the pamphlet that will identify all historic markers in the township.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he spoke with the Chief of Police who advised that the first car seat installation checkpoint will take place on May 30, 2025 from 4-6 p.m. at Bucks Mill Park with officers who are fully certified. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he's speaking with the Chief about a rewards program for recognizing officers for the work they have done being involved in very high profile cases where Colts Neck was instrumental in cracking the case.

Deputy Mayor Viola:

- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that review of the 2024 audit will be on the May 28, 2025 Township Committee agenda.
- Deputy Mayor stated that the Department of Public Works is on their final pick up of brush. Deputy Mayor Viola reported that Clean Up Day had 146 vehicles from Colts Neck and 221 senior/handicap picks up the following week.
- Deputy Mayor Viola reported that the planning board met last night and had a review of the plan. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Planning Board will vote on the plan at their June 9, 2025 meeting and the Township Committee will host an information session on the plan at their June 11, 2025 meeting.

Mayor Buss:

- Mayor Buss stated that the Monmouth County Tourism Group met to discuss the FIFA World Cup that is coming to the Meadowlands in 2026.
- Mayor Buss stated that she attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for Via Sposito and congratulated Vincent Esposito and wished him much success.
- Mayor Buss stated that she attended the Eatontown Industrial Park Association (EIPA) Mayor's meeting where the association of the US Army celebrated the 250

year anniversary of the Army. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Jim Staveley, Senior General Manager of Kushner was present and spoke about the Monmouth Mall Project. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that Kara Kopach, Executive Director of the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority was present and spoke about Netflix, housing, jobs, etc.

- Mayor Buss stated that the Planning Board met last night and memorialized a resolution for preliminary and final major site plan approval with variances for 440 Route 34 parking lot, the former Well Fargo Bank building. Mayor Buss stated that the Planning Board also discussed the plans for Round 4 affordable housing. Mayor Buss stated that the owner of 430 Route 34, the former Becker's Hardware property spoke about a proposed Ace Hardware and gym coming to the space and received site plan input for the project.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Executive Fire Council meeting is tomorrow evening and they will discuss a billing program, a specification committee for the acquisition of the new fire truck, and discussion of fire works and a fee structure for such activities.

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

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

Doug Latrenta, resident, stated that he is a 35 year resident of the township. Mr. Latrenta stated that lately he is worried and concerned that the current stewards of Colts Neck have lost their way. Mr. Latrenta expressed that he feels the Township Committee is jeopardizing the resident's livelihood, temperament and are not being transparent with the residents. Mr. Latrenta stated that he is unsure if he can live the rest of his life in Colts Neck. Mr. Latrenta asked if the township has a communications manager and if so who is that person. Mr. Latrenta spoke about the constant bickering and the vile social media posts that are happening. Mr. Latrenta spoke about two people posting on social media that no one in town knows and stated that they have highjacked the Township Committee's communication policy and stated that has to stop. Mr. Latrenta stated that he is a 35-year vet of the media world and stated that the Township Committee needs to have honest communication. Mr. Latrenta asked how the township has a line item for an event in Atlantic City for a conference and spoke about the event that took place there between a committee member and a member of the Planning Board.

Mayor Buss responded stating that this is a Township Committee meeting to discuss the business of the town. Mayor Buss stated that some of what was mentioned by Mr. Latrenta is non-governmental and the Township Committee is not there to discuss what people are doing or saying on social media. Mayor Buss stated that the Public Communications Officer is the Township Administrator, the township does not have a Public Communications Manager. Mayor Buss responded stating that the Township pays for conferences for continuing education credits, the township does not pay for hotel stays.

Scott Schwardon, resident, stated that he appreciates all of the Township Committee members and their job stating that it's a tough job to do. Mr. Schwardon stated that he wants to understand some of the things that he has been reading and would like someone to explain something that he read in regard to a 65% increase in the township's budget over the last five years. Mr. Schwardon stated meeting minutes from five years ago the Township Committee voted yes for an affordable housing project on Route 537. Mr. Schwardon stated that the bottom line for him is he loves Colts Neck, and he wants to make sure he is voting for the right person for Township Committee whether that is Committeewoman Fitzpatrick or someone else.

Deputy Mayor Viola responded to Mr. Schwardon stating that for many years the prior Governing Bodies did not reinvest in the township. Deputy Mayor spoke about the financial meltdown in 2008 and recovering from that. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the township has 110 miles of local roads, and the township is supposed to repave the town every twenty years, five miles per year. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that it did not take place previously and the township is never going to catch up, however, in the last

few years the township has been repaving roads. Deputy Mayor Viola spoke about reducing long term debt and financing the new municipal building at a 2.28% rate and pay as you go capital. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that this year the township received $881,000 for land preservation which goes to the top of the budget. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the township committee was chastised by the public for not seeking grant opportunities. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Township has applied for several grants and are now chastised for having to match grant funds. Deputy Mayor Viola spoke about the 2020 municipal budget and COVID-19 and taking all spending out of the budget and then putting those items back in the 2021 budget.

Fulton Wilcox, resident, spoke about data issues and the bills list. Mr. Wilcox stated that items listed on the bills list could have better descriptions and that the fields available on the bills list are not being utilized to their full space and number of characters allowed. Mr. Wilcox spoke about the audit being paid for in payments with indication as to what the total cost was. Mr. Wilcox asked who was in cash trouble and is that why it was paid for in pieces. Mr. Wilcox spoke about two payments on the bills list for the septic system for the new municipal building and stated that what is missing from the bills list is an entry showing monies coming back from the contractor having to pay for the septic issues in the new municipal building. Mr. Wilcox stated there is an item on the bills list for $61,000 that has to do with some sort of settlement with absolutely no clue as to what that represents. Mr. Wilcox stated that we live in a world of Artificial Intelligence, and it is as if the team here is trying to cut down the use of explanatory fields to minimize the value of that information. Mr. Wilcox also spoke about a $78,000 payment on the bills list, that is an interest payment with no explanation as to what the interest rate is.

Mayor Buss responded to Mr. Wilcox stating that she will speak with the Chief Financial Officer in regard to the fields on the bills list to determine if more information can be included.

Deputy Mayor Viola responded to Mr. Wilcox stating that the auditor's payments is per their contract. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the $61,000 payment to NJDEP is a settlement amount for fines received from the NJDEP which was discussed and explained at a prior meeting that Mr. Wilcox may not have been in attendance for. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the $78,000 payment was to the Monmouth County Improvement Authority and was an interest payment.

Kevin O'Brien, resident, commented that three of the five committee members stated they would not prefer a yellow fire truck so if three of the five agree there is nothing to debate.. Mr. O'Brien stated that he has respect for the fire department, but if it costs the township more money to purchase a yellow fire truck than it that color should not be chosen. Mr. O'Brien stated that he offered to sit down for coffee with the mayor and received no response. Mr. O'Brien thanked Mayor Buss for now streaming the Township Committee meetings live and stated that there were 40 people watching. Mr. O'Brien extended his thanks to Attorney Bennett and Clerk Lindsey for all that they do.

Mayor Buss responded, stating that the township committee is very cost conscious so the fire truck purchase will be considered at great lengths. Mayor Buss stated that residents who threaten to take legal action against the town lose their right to meet privately because of the litigation threat.

Robert Sayko, resident, stated that he has been a resident of Colts Neck for 37 years and worked at Bell Labs. Mr. Sayko stated that he worked with the township and the Police Department on a Comcast contract, and dead spots as well as telephone communications. Mr. Sayko read off previous township committee member names such as Jim Schatzle, Lillian Burry and a few others and stated that this township committee seems to be losing it with the public. Mr. Sayko stated that he sent information to the committee on when not to use a stop sign and not receiving any response from any committee members except Mayor Buss who stated the information was interesting. Mr. Sayko stated that it is clear the township committee never did their due diligence with the police department in regards to stop signs. Mr. Sayko asked who is running Colts Neck, the Township Committee or the Police Department.

Mayor Buss responded, stating that she appreciates the feedback. Mayor Buss stated that she ran for Township Committee because she previously attended many meetings and she wanted the opportunity to engage the public. Mayor Buss stated that it is unfortunate that there are residents that are unhappy with the job the township committee is doing, however, it is not an elected official's job to tell the Police Department where a stop sign or speed limit sign should go. Mayor Buss stated that the township committee will take Mr. Sayko's comments under advisement and continue to work with the police department.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded stating that he will speak with the Chief of Police and make sure someone from the Police Department meets with Mr. Sayko to discuss his concerns.

Committeeman Buzzetta reminded residents that they can reach out to a township committee member any time and do not have to wait for a meeting to express concerns.

Allan Ryan, resident, commented that residents are hung up on the color of a fire truck. Mr. Ryan spoke about a recent house fire in town and stated that those residents wouldn't have cared if the fire truck was purple, orange or blue stating that the fire fighters are volunteers and when there is an emergency no one cares what color the fire truck is.

Elaine Mann, resident, asked if the township has an ordinance in place for the fire department to enter private residences when a fire risk is reported. Ms. Mann spoke about an incident at the fire on Tanglewood recently involving a fire fighter and a resident and asked if the police officer on site reported the incident to his superiors. Ms. Mann also spoke about an incident that took place in 2021 between herself and a former committee member and questioned why the incident wasn't investigated by the township committee.

Attorney Bennett stated that those incidents are police matters and not a township committee matter. Attorney Bennett stated that she will look into the ordinance.

Meghan, those incidents are police matters will look into the ordinance.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded stating that the incident with Ms. Mann occurred in 2021 which was a verbal argument. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the verbal argument was reported to the Police Department and he believes the County Prosecutor. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that feelings may have been hurt during that argument, but no one was touched and no one was assaulted. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the incident was already investigated by two law enforcement agencies.

Anthony Ursino, resident, asked about a contractor hired by the township who used to paint house numbers on the sidewalk or road for houses that are not visible from the road.

Deputy Mayor Viola and Committeeman Rizzuto responded stating that is the responsibility of the homeowner and is required for emergency vehicles and the post office.

Marianne Cucolo, resident, stated that Elaine Mann has every right to ask about the incident from 2021 because it was unpleasant and she doesn't feel it was ever resolved. Ms. Cucolo asked if the incident violated the township's code of conduct and asked why there are different standards for different people. Attorney Bennett responded stating that incident was a police matter.

Mayor Buss responded stating that she was not witness to the event that took place that evening, however, when she left the venue Ms. Mann seemed to be in need and she offered Ms. Mann a ride home. Mayor Buss stated that there are policies and procedures put in place for the township and they are not different for anyone.

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.

12. <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 8:54 p.m.

Trina Lindsey, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: 05/28/25