COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 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 former Committeeman/Mayor J.P. Bartolomeo to lead 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 April 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, Committeeman Frank Rizzuto
Also Present:	Kathleen Capristo, Township Administrator, Trina Lindsey, Municipal Clerk, and Meghan Bennett, Township Counsel
Absent:	None

5. **Proclamation(s)**

   a. National Alcohol Awareness Month – April 2025

   Deputy Mayor Viola read the proclamation and presented it to Anita Dedalis, Prevention Alliance.

   b. National Donate Life Month – April 2025

   Committeewoman Fitzpatrick read the proclamation, and the Committee presented the proclamation to former Committeeman J.P. Bartolomeo who was present representing NJ Sharing Network. Former Committeeman Bartolomeo spoke about the importance of donating organs and tissue. Mr. Bartolomeo spoke about the various ways to become an organ donor through the NJ Sharing Network, or on your license. Mr. Bartolomeo stated that the slogan for NJ Sharing Network is "Say yes, save lives". Mr. Bartolomeo stated that NJ Sharing Network is hosting a 5K run/walk on May 17, 2025, in Ocean Grove, NJ.

   c. Recognition of Colts Neck Cougars High School Boys Basketball State Champions

   Mayor Buss read the proclamation and presented it to the Colts Neck Cougars team. The entire Township Committee congratulated the team on their success. The coach said a few words about the team and spoke about the success of the team, the players commitment to the team and their behavior on and off the court. One of the players spoke about the determination of the team and how they came together to win the championship.

   The Committee took a brief break to allow the team to take some pictures.

6. **Minutes**

   a. March 26, 2025 – Executive session
   b. March 26, 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 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					

7. **New business:**

   a. Resolution 2025-84: Authorizing award of contract for drainage improvements and reconstruction of cul-de-sac on Christopher Drive, $43,960.00

Mayor Buss called for comments. Administrator Capristo stated that this resolution is in connection with a drainage repair on Christopher Drive, which has been a problem for about a year and a half. Administrator Capristo stated that this resolution is to award that contract. 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 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					

   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 2025-85: Resolution authorizing Change Order No. 1 to the contract awarded to Meco, Inc. for the FY 2024 Capital Road Improvement Program Phase II, Various Roads

   b. Resolution 2025-86: Confirming hiring part-time Planning Board/Board of Adjustment Secretary, Krista Hill-Kane

   c. Resolution 2025-87: A resolution authorizing and approving a shared services agreement for the provision of security monitors between Colts Neck Township and Colts Neck School District

   d. Resolution 2025-88: Authorizing the release of two cash performance guarantees and inspection escrow funds for Captivating Construction Group, Block 11, Lot 3.02 – 151 Dutch Lane Road

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					

c. 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 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

Committeewoman Fitzpatrick:

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Environmental Commission will host a clean-up town hall day on April 15, 2025, for Earth Day, clean-up will begin at 6:00 p.m., volunteers are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the sapling giveaway will be held on April 26, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the Bucks Mill Recreation Center.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Farmland and Open Space Committee is planning to create a semi-annual bulletin, which will cover topics of interest for Colts Neck landowners. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the bulletin will also cover Farm Bureau applications and other

information on agriculture programs and farmland use. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the U.S. Navy has earmarked $3 million dollars for preservation along their buffer zone. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the committee is currently working on several properties for the very near future totaling 200 acres. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick urged residents to contact her if they know anyone in the community who has expressed an interest in farmland preservation.

- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that the Colts Neck Business Association is hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony on April 16, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. as a formal welcome to The Grind, all are welcome to attend.
- Committeewoman Fitzpatrick stated that next week is holy week for Christians and Passover for the Jewish faith. Committeewoman Fitzpatrick wished everyone a blessed and joyful time with their families and friends.

Committeeman Rizzuto:

- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that he met with Chief DeVito and discussed the Police Department launching a Facebook page so they can put notifications out to the public. Committeeman Rizzuto stated to stay tuned for more information on that in the near future.
- Committeeman Rizzuto stated that OEM is still updating the five-year plan and working on setting up a training drill.
- Committeeman Rizzuto asked Michele Battista, who was in the audience to give an update on the Historic Preservation Committee. Ms. Battista stated that the Historic Preservation Committee will participate in Weekend in Old Monmouth and the Montrose School will be open that weekend for visitors. Weekend in Old Monmouth will take place on May 3, 2025, and May 4, 2025. Ms. Battista stated that the Montrose School will have a field trip for 3rd grade students to visit the school on April 30, 2025.

Committeeman Buzzetta:

- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he missed the Senior's Club meeting due to being away on business.
- Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he attended the Board of Education meeting last night. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the board discussed the replacement of roofs on the schools, board is considering various options. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the roof projects for the schools could cost as much as $3 million dollars. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he is confident that the board has it well in hand and is working with good consultants.

Deputy Mayor Viola:

- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that recycling center Saturday hours at the Department of Public Works are from 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that brush pick up is in Zone 2 currently and there are no more leaf pick-ups until the fall. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that everyone should have received the clean-up day flyer in the mail, which will be on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at Mazza Recycling. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that senior citizen residents can schedule with the department of public works to have their items picked up at the curb, but residents must call to be put on that list.
- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the township is still waiting for the final document from the court in regard to affordable housing Round 3. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the township has received documentation from the court in regard to Round 4 and the township is compliant. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the draft plan for Round 4 will be provided to the Affordable Housing subcommittee next week who will review the draft and offer comments. Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the Planning Board will review the plan at their June 9, 2025, meeting, Deputy Mayor Viola noted that the Planning Board meeting has been moved from Tuesday, June 10, 2025, to Monday, June 9, 2025, so not to interfere with Primary Election Day.

- Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the second reading/public hearing of the municipal budget will take place at April 30, 2025, Township Committee meeting.
- Committeeman Buzzetta added to the Deputy Mayor's affordable housing report stating that he and Deputy Mayor Viola continue to meet with various organizations and various groups for different types of housing that may be available. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that these meetings are preliminary and informational in nature, but they are gathering information and how these organizations approach affordable housing.

Mayor Buss:

- Mayor Buss stated that the Board of Health meeting was cancelled.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Friends of the Library book sale is scheduled for April 26, 2025, and April 27, 2025.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Prevention Alliance met and discussed that a part of the Alliance's grant funding was suspended due to some federal programs that lost grant funding. Mayor Buss stated that Anita Dedalis, Alliance Coordinator, does a great job and is making sure that all of the programs that are put into place will have funding this year. Mayor Buss stated that National Night Out will be held on the 1st Tuesday in August.
- Mayor Buss stated that the Planning Board met last night and had a presentation from the new owner of the old Wells Fargo space on Route 34. Mayor Buss stated that the new owners have done a great job with the property, put in a brand-new septic system and have done a lot of nice work. Mayor Buss stated that they have it over 50% rented currently and all is going well. Mayor Buss stated that she believes there are plans in the works for the new Becker's Hardware space, and those new owners should present to the Planning Board at their next meeting.

8. <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.

Robert Sayko, resident, spoke about speed limit signs being a problem in the town. Mr. Sayko stated that he submitted an OPRA request for several items and did not receive all of the items he requested. Mr. Sayko stated that he asked for the invoice showing the cost of all of the stop signs purchased and he only received one invoice showing the purchase of 60 stop signs. Mr. Sayko asked where the rest of the stop signs are. Mr. Sayko stated that the OPRA request stated that the Police Department utilized the Uniform Manual on Traffic Devices, which he stated he does not believe because there wouldn't be stop signs at every intersection if the police department utilized that manual. Mr. Sayko stated that some of the stop signs that were installed are contrary to the manual for proper placement. Mr. Sayko stated that he did not receive any information in regard to the other documents he requested on his OPRA request that he did not receive. Mr. Sayko stated that he feels the Township Committee is not watching funds properly and that he does not consider his OPRA request to be fulfilled and closed. Mr. Sayko spoke about the issues with the new municipal building and stated that the residents feel the Township Committee is not being transparent and open.

Deputy Mayor Viola asked what Mr. Sayko would have the Township Committee do differently than what they are doing. Mr. Sayko responded and stated that it is not up to him and stated that the residents get the sense that the Township Committee is leading them not representing them.

Mayor Buss responded to Mr. Sayko stating that she spoke with the Police Department regarding the stop signs and the speed limit signs. Mayor Buss stated that several residents have thanked the Township Committee for installing additional stop signs and increasing safety measures.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded to Mr. Sayko stating that he feels the comment in regard to the issues with the new municipal building is very unfair after the

presentation that Administrator Capristo gave at the last meeting updating the residents on the various issues and the measures being taken to rectify those issues.

Administrator Capristo responded to Mr. Sayko stating that Mr. Sayko spoke with the Municipal Clerk Lindsey in regard to his OPRA request and Ms. Lindsey explained to him that multiple documents that he requested do not exist and there are no responsive documents to those requests. Administrator Capristo responded to Mr. Sayko's question in regard to the invoice that states 60 stop signs were purchased, Administrator Capristo stated that the remainder of the stop signs may not have been purchased yet. Administrator Capristo reminded Mr. Sayko that he is welcome to call the finance department, Clerk Lindsey and any other employee with any questions he may have.

Committeeman Buzzetta responded to Mr. Sayko stating that Mr. Sayko left out that he has spoken with several members of the Police Department in regard to the stop signs and that Lieutenant Mayer has offered to meet with Mr. Sayko any time to explain the installation of the stop signs throughout the township. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that he has been an elected member of the Township Committee for almost four months now and has had many residents call or reach out to thank the Township Committee for the work they do. Committeeman Buzzetta reminded Mr. Sayko that he can call any time and speak with anyone to discuss any concerns he has. Committeeman Buzzetta stated that the Township Committee and the staff are open to discussing any matters, except matters of litigation of course, and if they cannot discuss a matter because it is in litigation they will advise why they cannot discuss that matter.

Committeeman Rizzuto second Committeeman Buzzetta's comments and urged residents to reach out and ask questions, especially on the topic of affordable housing. Committeeman Rizzuto stated that the township is doing very well, and the Township Committee is willing to meet with anyone anytime.

Fulton Wilcox, resident, stated that the Township Committee does not publish performance reports and that the bills list is the only report that the township publishes which shows the amount spent, but does not give any back-up information as to what the invoices are for. Mr. Wilcox noted a $2,000 payment made to T&M Engineering and a $32,000 payment made to Griffin Engineering with no explanation as to what that is for. Mr. Wilcox stated that the Township Committee needs to publish more information on the bills list.

Administrator Capristo responded to Mr. Wilcox stating that Griffin Engineering is the construction manager who oversees the new municipal building project and as discussed previously some of those costs will be recuperated through the performance guarantee of the contractor. Administrator Capristo also stated that Mr. Wilcox can reach out to the Chief Financial Officer, John Antonides, at any time to inquire about anything on the bills list.

Deputy Mayor Viola responded noting that the $32,000 payment to Griffin Engineering covers five months of services.

Mayor Buss and Deputy Mayor Viola stated that the municipality publishes the bills list, the annual municipal budget as well as the annual audit reports which are all on the township website.

Michele Battista, resident, spoke about the improvements made to White Oak Drive, specifically the replacement of various curbs. Ms. Battista stated that the driveways are higher than the curb, which will result in water puddling at the end of the driveways which will eventually ruin the road. Ms. Battista also spoke about large pieces of tar that were left behind by the company. Ms. Battista stated that the decision on which curbs were replaced was sporadic and she feels the curb replacement wasn't worth doing.

Administrator Capristo responded to Ms. Battista stating that Ms. Battista had several conversations with her as well as with T&M Engineering, who is the Township's engineer and who oversaw the road project. Administrator Capristo stated that the

township relies on the township engineer to determine which curbs integrity is compromised and requires replacement. Administrator Capristo stated that it costs a lot of money to repave and replace curbs and stated that all curbs are not replaced because it depends on which ones need to be replaced.

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

9. **Adjournment:**
As there was no further business, Mayor Buss called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto seconded by Committeewoman Fitzpatrick and a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Trina Lindsey, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: 04/30/25