COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 28, 2026, 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL

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

2. 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, 2026, stating that a regular meeting of the Township Committee would be held on January 28, 2026, 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 January 20, 2026, noting the meeting time change from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m."

3. Roll call by Township Administrator/Municipal Clerk Capristo indicated the following:

   Present: Mayor Michael Viola, Deputy Mayor Dan Buzzetta, Committeeman Frank Rizzuto, Committeewoman Tara Torchia Buss, and Committeeman John Tobia

   Also Present: Kathleen Capristo, Township Administrator/Municipal Clerk, Meghan Bennett, Township Counsel

   Absent: None

4. Resolution 2026-41: Executive Session – Potential Litigation and Personnel

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

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

   After closed session, Mayor Viola asked for a motion to go back to open session. On a motion by Committeeman Rizzuto, seconded by Committeeman Tobia, and a unanimous voice vote, the Governing Body was back in open session at 7:13 p.m.

5. Mayor Viola asked everyone to join in the salute to the flag.

6. Mayor Viola asked for a moment of silence.

7. Proclamation
   a. 2026 National Wear Red Day

   Committeewoman Buss read the proclamation and encourage everyone to wear red on February 6, 2026.

8. Minutes
   a. January 14, 2026 – Executive Session
   b. January 14, 2026 – Regular Meeting

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

9. New Business

a. Consent Agenda

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

A. Resolution 2026-42 – Authorizing the Submission of Strategic Plan for the Colts Neck Municipal Alliance Grant for Fiscal Year 2027
B. Resolution 2026-43 – Authorizing Monmouth County Mosquito Control Division to Conduct Aerial Mosquito Control Operations

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

C. Resolution 2026-44 – Authorizing the Purchase of Holmatro Extrication Rescue Tools for Colts Neck Fire Department through N.J. State Contract #17-FLEET-0820

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

b. Approval of Vouchers

Deputy Mayor Buzzetta highlighted several key expense categories and advised that he found all to be in order.

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

Committeeman Tobia stated that he believes the affordable housing attorneys should detail in their bills who they are speaking to. Ms. Bennett advised the Committee that she has spoken to Mr. Trautner and his firm will begin to include that detail starting with their next invoice.

Mayor Viola called for a second to his motion, seconded by Committeewoman Buss.

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

Deputy Mayor 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 Municipal Court.

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

Committeeman Tobia stated that he votes "yes" on all the bills except the affordable housing attorney legal fees to which he votes "no".

c. Administrator's Report

Administrator Capristo reported on the recent winter storm. Ms. Capristo gave a recap of what the Township professionals did in advance of the storm to prepare, which included an OEM Zoom meeting of all key department heads including Police, Fire, First Aid, and Public Works to ensure readiness of all equipment, materials, personnel, and the like. Ms. Capristo also noted that prior to the event, and consistent with the Township's Ice and Snow Control Plan, the Department of Public Works brined approximately 30 miles of Township roads. Ms. Capristo further reported that the Department of Public Works took the lead in terms of snow removal and when accumulation reached a certain level, again consistent with the Ice and Snow Control Plan and the contract, the Township's contractor was engaged, and the two entities worked together to plow snow throughout the town. This storm brought approximately a foot of snow, fours hours of freezing rain and sleet, another inch of snow, and then days of frigid temperatures, stated Ms. Capristo. Ms. Capristo advised that an added challenge was the efficacy of salt when temperatures fell below 20 degrees and in this event the availability of salt. Ms. Capristo reported that while salt was available, getting it was the challenge as the venders had difficulties getting salt supplies from the Newark ports to the counties and municipalities. As such, Ms. Capristo noted, the shared service agreement the Township normally relies on for additional salt was shut down the prior week. Fortunately, Ms. Capristo added, a conference call took place with Senator Vin Gopal on Tuesday and County Commissioner Tom Arnone reported that the County now had salt that they made available to Monmouth County towns. The Township plans to pick up additional salt on Friday, Ms. Capristo reported. Ms. Capristo also reported that there were no power outages, down trees, or injuries or accidents involving Township employees.

d. Township Committee Reports

Committeeman Tobia:

- Committeeman Tobia reported that the Environment Commission met to conduct their annual reorganization.
- Committeeman Tobia announced that he attended a meeting of County officials regarding the 250th Celebration and brought back a plaque for

the Township and advised that the County has a number of events planned.

- Committeeman Tobia expressed his thanks to Commissioner Arnone for his support in getting the Township additional salt.
- Committeeman Tobia advised that he assembled a list of his recommendations for additional affordable housing attorneys and asked the Administrator to distribute the list to the other Governing Body members.

Committeewoman Buss:

- Committeewoman Buss reported that the Prevention Alliance meeting was cancelled due to the weather. Ms. Buss added that 75% of the funding for Colts Neck Prevention Alliance activities comes from the Alliance and Colts Neck makes up the remaining 25%. These funds support many activities including speakers at the schools, Ms. Buss noted. Ms. Buss further reported that the rules as to what the funds can be used for has changed dramatically in recent years and as such there are many more restrictions in place. Ms. Buss thanked Ms. Anita DeDalis for all her hard work with the Alliance.
- Committeewoman Buss reported that she attended the Colts Neck Business Association (CNBA) meeting that spoke of the 250th George Washington event as well as other events.
- Committeewoman Buss reported that the Friends of the Library upcoming book sales are scheduled for May 2, 2026 and May 3, 2026.

Committeeman Rizzuto:

- Committeeman Rizzuto expressed thanks to the first responders and public works for all their efforts related to the recent storm.
- Committeeman Rizzuto reported on the 250th Celebration events specifically detailing the upcoming George Washington dinner event which will include period costumes, a quartet, old time cocktails, and more.
- Committeeman Rizzuto also reported that the police department has posted the new eBike regulations on their website and encouraged the public to visit the website to obtain more details.

Deputy Mayor Buzzetta:

- Deputy Mayor Buzzetta reported that a decision is still pending regarding the mediation program arising from the three objectors which included two developers and Fair Sharing Housing.
- Deputy Mayor Buzzetta reported on the lawsuit spearheaded by the Mayor of Montvale advising that the first lawsuit was dismissed and the second suit filed was dismissed with prejudice adding that the case is now in the Federal Appellate court.
- Deputy Mayor Buzzetta reported that the Board of Education (BOE) announced that Kevin Walsh will be the new liaison to the Township Committee. Mr. Buzzetta also reported that there is a study underway to determine if there is a need to declare a critical school capacity condition in connection with potential additional development in Colts Neck.

Mayor Viola:

- Mayor Viola expressed his thanks to the first responders and public works for their efforts related to the recent storm.
- Mayor Viola reminded the public not to push snow into the roadways when clearing snow from their properties.
- Mayor Viola reported that the Recreation Committee met and reported they are considering bringing back the Homerun Derby event and the Summer Concert Series will kick-off with Brian Kirk and the Jerks sponsored by the CNBA.
- Mayor Viola further reported that the Seniors Club's next meeting is February 4, 2026.

- Mayor Viola reported that the navy leadership at Naval Weapons Station Earle have voiced opposition to development within the 3,000 foot setback.
- Mayor Viola reported that the CNBA has a new website and encouraged the public to review it to obtain details regarding the 250th Celebration events.
- Mayor Viola reported that the Township's Budget Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 4:30 pm.
- Mayor Viola encouraged the public to sign up for News & Notices.

9. Public Comment:

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

Brian Veisz, resident, expressed concern about the icy condition of his street after the recent storm and while acknowledging that salt may be ineffective in the cold temperatures asked if an attempt could be made to address a portion of the icy section of his street near the intersection.

Mayor Viola acknowledged his concern and advised that there are several areas around the Township experiencing similar conditions and asked for input from Mr. Tobia.

Mr. Tobia stated that as a result of the public works liaison position being eliminated by the Township Committee, he has not been privy to the Ice and Snow Control Plan and as such he is not prepared to comment. Mr. Tobia advised that if the Township Committee would like him to look at the plan, he'd be happy to do so.

Kevin O'Brien, resident, offered a definition of pending litigation and stated that the cost for repairs to Town Hall should be shared in support of transparency. Mr. O'Brien stated that the Executive Session discussions should remain private and confidential and shouldn't be leaked to suit childlike bickering. Mr. O'Brien stated that $1.5 million was the average price of the four contractors for the park bathroom project and $742,500 was the estimated price submitted for the grant which is 42% higher than compared to the Township Engineer's estimate of $522,330. Mr. O'Brien asked how the Administrator's price was over $750,000 cheaper than the average price from four contractors. Mr. O'Brien opined that the duties for the Township Administrator as written 56 years ago should not be eliminated because the Township Administrator failed or refused to support the Township's ordinance. Mr. O'Brien inquired if the Administrator's failure to act was ignorance or just discrimination against him for exercising his right to speak. Mr. O'Brien stated that a resident brought in loads of dirt, altered the grade, installed a tee box, basin, and putting green in a scenic corridor easement but did not receive a single violation. Mr. O'Brien encouraged his fellow residents to use a bogus email and/or phone number when reporting concerns to the Township. Mr. O'Brien stated that the DPW did an outstanding job in connection with the storm. Mr. O'Brien stated that the last Township Committee meeting was a disgrace and needs improvement.

Attorney Meghan Bennett responded, stating that the Township is currently in mediation with Hall Building Corporation as the contract requires this step prior to litigation. Ms. Bennett spoke to the ordinance in connection with the Administrator's duties and advised that she has brought the matter to the attention of the Governing Body and she will amend the ordinance as directed by the Governing Body.

Mayor Viola spoke to the tee box advising that the matter is still under consideration with the Township Planner and if needed, will be before the Governing Body in the future. Ms. Capristo addressed the matter of the Notice of Violation (NOV) advising that no NOV was issued by the Zoning Officer as the resident had been very cooperative in addressing the matter and if needed, the resident will come before this body if the resident chooses to seek additional relief outside the Zoning Officer's purview.

Daniel Kryzanekas, resident, requested a speed limit change on Montrose Road from 45 mph to 35 mph. Mr. Kryzanekas also opined that he felt 40 mph limit on Cedar Drive was too high. Mr. Kryzanekas also requested consideration to install "Turtle Crossing" signs on Montrose Road near the Ditmar Farm. In addition, Mr. Kryzanekas requested consideration for a dedicated left turn from Route 537 onto Bucks Mill Road. Mr. Kryzanekas voiced support for seeking new legal counsel for the Township's affordable housing issues.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded that he would check with Chief DeVito regarding the speed study conducted on Montrose. Administrator Capristo advised that the study was complete and that per Chief DeVito the results of the study did not warrant a reduction in the speed limit but that the department would increase patrols and enforcement.

Committeeman Tobia asked the Administrator to provide the Governing Body with a copy of the study and to contact Mr. Ettore at Monmouth County regarding the status of the dedicated left turn lane at Montrose and Bucks Mill Roads.

Committeewoman Buss added that she has recently spoken to the Chief regarding the study and other traffic calming measures that may be appropriate and offered to reach out to the Chief for an update.

Mr. Tom Orgo, resident, spoke to his concern about residents parking in the street during snowstorm events which makes it difficult for the plowing crews to do their jobs. Mr. Orgo encouraged the police department to ensure resident vehicles are off the roads.

Elaine Kryzanekas, resident, reiterated her husband's concerns about speeding on Montrose Road and voiced that she felt enforcement was most important especially during certain times of day when speeding is most likely to occur such as in the mornings between 8 am and 9:30 am and in the evening after school. Ms. Kryzanekas also opined that there are certain sections of the road that may be more likely to have slower or faster moving vehicles.

Committeeman Rizzuto responded that he would speak with the Chief and relay results of targeted enforcement to the public.

Michael Kalisz, resident, stated that Mr. Tobia mentioned that there is no liaison position for DPW and asked why this position was eliminated.

Ms. Capristo addressed, noting that this topic has been raised several times. Ms. Capristo advised that for several years she has been of the opinion that liaison roles for departments such as Public Works and Code Enforcement were not necessary as these are departments that report to the Township Administrator unlike the other liaison roles that are assigned to committees and commissions, such as the Environmental Commission and Historic Preservation Committee. As in previous years, Ms. Capristo stated, she requested that these liaison roles be eliminated noting that the two departments run very smoothly and are not in need of a liaison. Ms. Capristo stated that it was not intended to be a political slight towards Mr. Tobia as it has been characterized and if it is the sentiment of the Governing Body to bring the role back, she would have no objection.

Committeewoman Buss added that the job of the Governing Body is to legislate for the town and that sometimes as committee members they get calls from residents, and it can get challenging not to get more involved in the actual running of the town. Ms. Buss added that the liaison positions should allow for Township Committee members to go to the various meetings of the boards and report back or to pass things on to the Administrator or department heads that may need addressing.

Committeeman Tobia commented that if the liaison to the Department of Public Works is eliminated then the Appropriate Authority for the Police Department should be changed to the Administrator.

Alan Ryan, resident, expressed his appreciation for the first responders and their work in relation to the recent storm. Mr. Ryan suggested that the Committee consider adding a prayer to this meeting or perhaps play the National Anthem or God Bless America. Mr. Ryan broke out in song and encouraged the attendees of the meeting to sing along with him. Singing of God Bless America ensued.

Ms. Buss expressed her appreciation for Mr. Ryan's request and shared that there are others in the community that don't believe prayer should be part of the Governing Body meetings.

Mayor Viola thanked everyone for coming.

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

2. <u>Adjournment</u>:

As there was no further business, Mayor Viola called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Committeewoman Buss, seconded by Deputy Mayor Buzzetta and a unanimous voice vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

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Kathleen Capristo, RMC
Municipal Clerk

APPROVED: February 11, 2026