



BOROUGH OF RED BANK

90 MONMOUTH STREET ♦ RED BANK ♦ NJ 07701

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ♦ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 8, 2026 ♦ 6:31 P.M.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT This meeting is being held in accordance with the Public Laws of 1975, Chapter 231 and adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by a notice sent to Asbury Park Press, Two River Times and Star Ledger and posted in the Main Lobby of the Municipal Building and on the municipal website.

OPMA authorizes municipalities to conduct public meetings through use of streaming services and other online meeting platforms. The Red Bank Council is meeting in person as well as providing an option for the public to participate in via ZOOM video meetings. Please note that the option to attend is being provided as a courtesy, therefore, if Zoom becomes unavailable during the meeting and it cannot quickly be fixed, Council will continue with the remainder of the meeting. For those joining us via Zoom, please raise your hand during designated times to be recognized for a comment. Whether you are appearing in person or via Zoom, you must provide your name to be recognized.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmember Bonatakis, Councilmember Facey-Blackwood, Councilmember Forest, Councilmember Jannone (via Zoom), Councilmember Yuro, and Mayor Portman

Others present: Gregory Cannon, Borough Attorney, James Gant, Borough Manager, and Mary Moss, Borough Clerk

Absent: Deputy Mayor Triggiano

Mayor Portman stated on the record that Deputy Mayor Triggiano is in Trenton advocating for and awaiting on a judiciary vote on an Immigration Safety Bill.

PROCLAMATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/APPOINTMENTS

PRESENTATIONS

1. Winners of the Holiday Decorating Contest – presented by Mayor Portman and Director Salinas of Parks and Recreation
 - Lau Family: E. Bergen Place
 - Moore Family: W. Sunset Avenue
 - Lechuga Family: Worthley Street

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Councilmember Forest motioned to open the floor for public comment on agenda items only; Councilmember Yuro seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

No one commented

Councilmember Facey-Blackwood motioned to close the floor for public comments on agenda items only; Councilmember Bonatakis seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

NOTE: This may not be the order of business. There may be additions or deletions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 12/11/2025 - Councilmember Forest motioned to approve the minutes; Councilmember Bonatakis seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.
2. 1/1/2026 - Councilmember Forest motioned to approve the minutes; Councilmember Bonatakis seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

ORDINANCES

1. Introduction: Ordinance 2026-01, ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF RED BANK, COUNTY OF MONMOUTH, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 490, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATION RELATING TO SECTION 55 HISTORIC DISTRICTS/SITES REGULATION AND PROCEDURES, ADDING “ATTACHMENT 7” HISTORIC PRESERVATION DESIGN GUIDELINES

Councilmember Bonatakis motioned to approve Ordinance 2026-01 on first reading and to authorize the notice of approval and public hearing to be held on January 22, 2026, Councilmember Facey-Blackwood seconded. A roll call vote confirmed all in favor.

Mayor Portman stated that the public hearing on the ordinance would be held on January 22, 2026.

Councilmember Bonatakis provided some context to the HPC Design Guidelines and stated that the credit goes to the Historic Preservation members and all the professionals that contributed to this document. This is currently on Borough’s website for everyone to view.

Councilmember Facey-Blackwood also commented that this is an overall good guideline to follow and to take a look at.

Steven Smolyn (Design Guideline Consultant)- these guidelines will be transformative for the Borough going forward.

Attorney Cannon further stated that with the guidelines, these are standards/guidelines that are enforceable as well.

2. Introduction: Ordinance 2026-02, ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 300: “CONSTRUCTION CODES, UNIFORM” TO UPDATE CONSTRUCTION FEES.

Councilmember Facey-Blackwood motioned to approve Ordinance 2026-02 on first reading and to authorize the notice of approval and public hearing to be held on January 22, 2026, Councilmember Forest seconded. A roll call vote confirmed all in favor.

Mayor Portman stated that the public hearing on the ordinance would be held on January 22, 2026.

RESOLUTIONS

Councilmember Bonatakis motioned to approve resolutions 26-19 through 26-23 under Consent Agenda; Councilmember Forest seconded the motion. A roll call vote confirmed all in favor.

26-19 RESOLUTION FOR PAYMENT OF BILLS

26-20 RESOLUTION AWARDED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT TO FAIRVIEW INSURANCE AGENCY ASSOCIATES, INC. FOR PROPERTY & CASUALTY INSURANCE BROKERAGE AND RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES

26-21 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PROGRESS FINAL PAYMENT RELATED TO THE CONTRACT WITH PRECISE CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR THE IMPROVEMENT TO EAST SIDE PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT PHASE 3

26-22 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO. 1 RELATED TO THE CONTRACT WITH S. BATATA CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR THE PEDESTRIAN STATION IMPROVEMENTS (MONMOUTH STREET)

26-23 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT CERTIFICATE #5 FOR PEDESTRIAN STATION IMPROVEMENTS (MONMOUTH STREET)

DISCUSSION AND ACTION FOR MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Proposed events requesting feedback from Mayor and Council:- NONE

PUBLIC QUESTIONS COMMENTS

Councilmember Forest motioned to open the floor for public questions & comments; Councilmember Yuro seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

1. Joan Wetherell, 106 Manor Dr.: noted that Councilmember Jannone addressed all her items that she had listed to her satisfaction. In addition, she is looking forward to reviewing the HPC Design Guidelines. Thank everyone for their involvement.
2. Patricia Brennan, 80 Throckmorton Ave., Apt. B: addressed the Governing Body of her ongoing code violations at her apartment complex, she provided pictures as well. She would like the Borough to provide another inspection. She would like adequate lighting for her complex. She would also like to have the Borough address restrooms to work at the train station.

Councilmember Forest agreed that there should be accommodation for public restrooms at the train station.

Councilmember Forest motioned to close the floor for public questions & comments; Councilmember Yuro seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Councilmember Bonatakis - tragedy has been present throughout the nation and in our own town, she hopes that doesn't get normalized.
- Councilmember Yuro - stated that as a Councilmember, it is important to look out for all our community members and that is what he is set out to do. He is looking forward to being the liaison to the RiverCenter and bringing new ideas to the downtown district during Broadwalk season.
- Councilmember Facey-Blackwood wished all a Happy New Year. She is proud of the work that the Council is doing to work for everyone in the community and in keeping everyone safe. Copies of the Borough Calendar (a privately managed document) are available on the 1st floor of Borough Hall. Provide updates on the following committee(s): Environmental Commission and Green Team, and Shade Tree.
- Councilmember Jannone – wished all a Happy New Year. Reiterate the sentiments of Councilmember Bonatakis and Councilmember Facey-Blackwood that this council is here for everyone in the community. Everyone has the right to feel safe. Provided updated on the following committee(s): Animal Welfare, Library, and Mayor Wellness.
- Councilmember Forest – spoke briefly of his opinions on immigration issues. He is concerned/disturbed of 'junta' style policing. Provided updated on the following committee(s): Parks and Recreation and Board of Education.
- Mayor Portman – looking forward to the year ahead. Please reach out to the Mayor and Council with any issues/concerns that anyone in the public may have or would like to discuss.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS COMMENTS (RE-OPENED), at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Councilmember Forest motioned to re-open the floor for public questions & comments; Councilmember Bonatakis seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

1. Patricia Brennan, 80 Throckmorton Ave., Apt. B: stated that she has read the Borough Managers email and is quite upset that there is nothing on behalf the Borough can do

Mr. Cannon addressed Ms. Brennan is that this is a DCA regulated building. They have a whole set of standards beyond the Borough's reach, that may be the best course of action for her to address her concern. The Borough can assist in getting her additional information if needed to be provided to the DCA.

Borough Manager for the record stated that the Borough has and continues to address her concern in extensive detail. As explained, the Borough cannot be involved to landlord/tenant disputes. He also provided the DCA contact information to Ms. Brennan so they can regulate and log the complaints.

- Joan Wetherell, 106 Manor Dr.: reiterated that when a complex is regulated by the DCA, the municipality is limited to what can be done. The DCA should be the one that Ms. Brennan reaches out to.

Councilmember Forest motioned to close the floor for public questions & comments; Councilmember Facey-Blackwood seconded the motion. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

MANAGER'S REPORT – Borough Manager Gant reported on the following:

- Provided brief overview of key accomplishments and initiatives from 2025 and advised that a comprehensive Borough Manager's report is in preparation, with department reports currently being compiled.
- In 2025, the Borough continued to reinforce the Council-Manager form of government and advanced transit-oriented redevelopment initiatives. Areas in need of rehabilitation were designated to encourage reinvestment while preserving neighborhood character. The borough released the Historic Preservation Commission design guidelines following the re-establishment of the commission.
- In transportation and mobility, the Borough received statewide recognition for complete streets leadership and earned gold-level safe routes to school designation for the 2025–2027 period. Tactical urbanism and quick-built safety improvements were implemented through a grant at River Road and Leighton Avenue.
- In public safety: noted that the Police Chief completed a full year in the role and that leadership within the police department was strengthened through promotions.
- From a personnel and operations perspective, the Borough Clerk completed a full year of service. The Borough is exploring the addition of passport services. A Deputy Director of Public Utilities position was created and filled. The community engagement coordinator position was backfilled, and senior services, recreation, and community engagement functions were combined under unified leadership in accordance with the management enhancement report.
- The Borough Manager reported progress on multiple capital projects, including continued advancement of marine park improvements, development planning for a new department of public utilities facility, and upcoming senior center parking lot improvements. Additional infrastructure projects were completed through bond ordinances.
- The Borough adopted a 2025 budget with a two percent increase despite rising operational costs, including employee healthcare expenses. The Borough Manager referred to participating in regional insurance funds to support cost containment.
- Community engagement initiatives included the implementation of the "See My Legacy" sponsorship program. Looking ahead, the Borough will advance community solar initiatives, vision zero grant work, and other awarded grant projects in 2026.
- Concluded by expressing appreciation for staff collaboration and noted continued efforts to improve interdepartmental coordination and operational systems. "

EXECUTIVE SESSION: RESOLUTION NO. #26-24, approximately at 7:35 p.m.

Councilmember Facey-Blackwood offered a motion to enter executive session, seconded by Councilmember Bonatakis. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

Item # 1. Matters expressly rendered confidential by law

a) Contract (Lead Service Line) - Attorney Cannon

Atty. Cannon stated that there will be no action taken by the Borough Council after the executive session, and the session is expected to take approximately fifteen (15) minutes.

Present: Councilmember Bonatakis, Councilmember Facey-Blackwood, Councilmember Forest, Councilmember Jannone (via telephone), Deputy Mayor Triggiano (via telephone at approximately 7:46 p.m.), and Mayor Portman

Others present: Gregory Cannon, Borough Attorney, James Gant, Borough Manager, and Mary Moss, Borough Clerk

Absent:

There being no further business, Councilmember Forest offered a motion to adjourn the executive session, seconded by Councilmember Yuro. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

ADJOURNMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION: 8:11 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:11 p.m.

There being no further business, Councilmember Forest offered a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Jannone. A voice vote confirmed all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Moss, RMC
Borough Clerk