

**PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES**

The Public Meeting of the Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and called to order at 7:30PM. Adequate notification was published in the official newspaper of the Borough of Montvale. Master Sergeant Dieter Koelling led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and roll call was taken.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to The Bergen Record informing the public of the time and place according to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

Also Present: Mayor Mike Ghassali; Borough Attorney, Dave Lafferty; Administrator, Joe Voytus; and Municipal Clerk, Fran Scordo

ROLL CALL:

Councilmember Arendacs
Council President Cudequest
Councilmember Koelling

Councilmember Lane – arrived at 7:33pm
Councilmember Roche - absent
Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang - absent

POLICE CHIEF, DOUG MCDOWELL, QUARTERLY REPORT

Several events that took place between September through December are as follows: Junior Police Academy, 9/11 ceremony, Day in the Park, Halloween safety, Veterans wreath ceremony, senior holiday luncheon;

*Purchased a drone with seizure funds, 2 officers completed training on the drone; Received \$7,500 grant for "Drive Sober get Pulled Over" ; Any traffic related issues please email to **Traffic @montvaleboro.org***

Statistics for the year:

91 shop lifters reported, 506 accidents, 259 complaints issued, 265 total arrests. 5,718 summonses issued

Councilmembers commended the police department on all their efforts and wished them well in the coming year.

ORDINANCES:

None

MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC:

Agenda Items Only

Motion to open meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Koelling – all ayes

No Public Comment

Motion to close meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest – all ayes

MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC:

Agenda Items Only

MINUTES:

December 29, 2025

A motion to accept minutes by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest – all ayes

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE MINUTES:

December 4, 2025

A motion to accept closed session minutes by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - all ayes

December 11, 2025

A motion to accept closed session minutes by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - all ayes

December 29, 2025

A motion to accept closed session minutes by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - all ayes

RESOLUTIONS: NON-CONSENT

43-2026 A Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Planning Board Of The Borough Of Montvale To Undertake A Preliminary Investigation To Determine Whether The Property At 25 Phillips Parkway/1 Glenview Road Known As Block 3201 Lots 5 And 6 Meet The Statutory Criteria For A “Non-Condemnation Area In Need Of Redevelopment” Pursuant To The Local Redevelopment And Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40a :12a-1 Et. Seq.

WHEREAS, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq., (the “Redevelopment Law”) provides tools to assist municipalities encourage investment, development, and improvements of certain properties through programs of redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Law sets forth a specific procedure for designating an Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6, prior to a municipal governing body making a determination as to whether a study area qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment, the governing body must authorize the municipal planning board by resolution to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the area meets the criteria set forth at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 for designation of the area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale wishes to direct the Planning Board of the Borough of Montvale to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the property at 25 Phillips Parkway/1 Glenview Road and known as Block 3201 Lots 5 and 6 on the Official Tax Map of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment without the power of condemnation (the “Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment”) pursuant to the Redevelopment Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on this **8th** day of **January, 2026**, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that it hereby directs and authorizes the Planning Board of the Borough of Montvale (the “Planning Board”) to determine whether the property at 25 Phillips Parkway/1 Glenview Road known as Block 3201 Lots 5 and 6 (the “Study Area”), qualifies as a Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that to the extent that prior recommendations included "Condemnation" Redevelopment studies for this Property, those requests are superseded by this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that prior to the public hearing to be held by the Planning Board on the matter, the Planning Board shall prepare a map showing the boundaries of the Study Area and the location of the property included therein, and appended to the map shall be statement setting forth the basis for the investigation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall specify a date for and give notice of the hearing for the purpose of hearing persons who are interested in or would be affected by the determination of the Study Area as a Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the hearing notice shall set forth the general boundaries of the Study Area and state that a map has been prepared and can be inspected at the office of the Borough Clerk, and that a copy of the notice shall be published in an official newspaper as previously designated by the Borough, once a week for two consecutive weeks, and the last publication shall not be less than ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing, and that a copy of the notice shall be mailed ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing to property owners of each parcel of property within the Study Area, and within 200-feet of the Study Area, according to the assessment records of the Borough of Montvale, as well as persons at their last known address, if any, whose names are noted on the assessment records as claimants of an interest of any such parcel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall hear all persons who are interested in or would be affected by a determination that the Study Area qualifies under the redevelopment criteria and that all objections to such determination and evidence in support of those objections, given orally or in writing, shall be received and made part of the public records; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Borough Council in the form of a resolution with supporting documentation.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - a roll call was taken – all ayes

44-2026 A Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Planning Board Of The Borough Of Montvale To Undertake A Preliminary Investigation To Determine Whether The Property At 3 And 51 Chestnut Ridge Road Known As Block 3102 Lot 1.01 Meets The Statutory Criteria For A "Non-Condemnation Area In Need Of Redevelopment" Pursuant To The Local Redevelopment And Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40a :12a-1 Et. Seq

WHEREAS, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq., (the "Redevelopment Law") provides tools to assist municipalities encourage investment, development, and improvements of certain properties through programs of redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Law sets forth a specific procedure for designating an Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6, prior to a municipal governing body making a determination as to whether a study area qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment, the governing body must authorize the municipal planning board by resolution to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the area meets the criteria set forth at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 for designation of the area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale wishes to direct the Planning Board of the Borough of Montvale to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the property at 3 and 51 Chestnut Ridge Road and known as Block 3102 Lot 1.01 on the Official Tax Map of the

Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment without the power of condemnation (the "Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment") pursuant to the Redevelopment Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on this **8th** day of **January, 2026**, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that it hereby directs and authorizes the Planning Board of the Borough of Montvale (the "Planning Board") to determine whether the property at 3 and 51 Chestnut Ridge Road known as Block 3102 Lot 1.01 (the "Study Area"), qualifies as a Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that to the extent that prior recommendations included "Condemnation" Redevelopment studies for this Property, those requests are superseded by this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that prior to the public hearing to be held by the Planning Board on the matter, the Planning Board shall prepare a map showing the boundaries of the Study Area and the location of the property included therein, and appended to the map shall be statement setting forth the basis for the investigation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall specify a date for and give notice of the hearing for the purpose of hearing persons who are interested in or would be affected by the determination of the Study Area as a Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the hearing notice shall set forth the general boundaries of the Study Area and state that a map has been prepared and can be inspected at the office of the Borough Clerk, and that a copy of the notice shall be published in an official newspaper as previously designated by the Borough, once a week for two consecutive weeks, and the last publication shall not be less than ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing, and that a copy of the notice shall be mailed ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing to property owners of each parcel of property within the Study Area, and within 200-feet of the Study Area, according to the assessment records of the Borough of Montvale, as well as persons at their last known address, if any, whose names are noted on the assessment records as claimants of an interest of any such parcel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall hear all persons who are interested in or would be affected by a determination that the Study Area qualifies under the redevelopment criteria and that all objections to such determination and evidence in support of those objections, given orally or in writing, shall be received and made part of the public records; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Borough Council in the form of a resolution with supporting documentation.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - a roll call was taken – all ayes

45-2026 A Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Planning Board Of The Borough Of Montvale To Undertake A Preliminary Investigation To Determine Whether The Property At 1 Phillips Parkway Known As Block 3201 Lot 1 Meets The Statutory Criteria For A "Non-Condemnation Area In Need Of Redevelopment" Pursuant To The Local Redevelopment And Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40a :12a-1 Et. Seq.

WHEREAS, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq., (the "Redevelopment Law") provides tools to assist municipalities encourage investment, development, and improvements of certain properties through programs of redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Law sets forth a specific procedure for designating an Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

BOROUGH OF MONTVALE**JANUARY 8, 2026**

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6, prior to a municipal governing body making a determination as to whether a study area qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment, the governing body must authorize the municipal planning board by resolution to undertake a preliminary

investigation to determine whether the area meets the criteria set forth at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 for designation of the area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale wishes to direct the Planning Board of the Borough of Montvale to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the property at 1 Phillips Parkway and known as Block 3201 Lot 1 on the Official Tax Map of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment without the power of condemnation (the "Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment") pursuant to the Redevelopment Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on this **8th** day of **January, 2026**, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that it hereby directs and authorizes the Planning Board of the Borough of Montvale (the "Planning Board") to determine whether the property at 1 Phillips Parkway known as Block 3201 Lot 1 (the "Study Area"), qualifies as a Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et. seq.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that to the extent that prior recommendations included "Condemnation" Redevelopment studies for this Property, those requests are superseded by this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that prior to the public hearing to be held by the Planning Board on the matter, the Planning Board shall prepare a map showing the boundaries of the Study Area and the location of the property included therein, and appended to the map shall be statement setting forth the basis for the investigation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall specify a date for and give notice of the hearing for the purpose of hearing persons who are interested in or would be affected by the determination of the Study Area as a Non-Condensation Area in Need of Redevelopment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the hearing notice shall set forth the general boundaries of the Study Area and state that a map has been prepared and can be inspected at the office of the Borough Clerk, and that a copy of the notice shall be published in an official newspaper as previously designated by the Borough, once a week for two consecutive weeks, and the last publication shall not be less than ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing, and that a copy of the notice shall be mailed ten (10) days prior to the date set for the hearing to property owners of each parcel of property within the Study Area, and within 200-feet of the Study Area, according to the assessment records of the Borough of Montvale, as well as persons at their last known address, if any, whose names are noted on the assessment records as claimants of an interest of any such parcel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall hear all persons who are interested in or would be affected by a determination that the Study Area qualifies under the redevelopment criteria and that all objections to such determination and evidence in support of those objections, given orally or in writing, shall be received and made part of the public records; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Borough Council in the form of a resolution with supporting documentation.

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - a roll call was taken – all ayes

RESOLUTIONS: (CONSENT AGENDA*)

*All items listed on a consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Borough Council and will be approved by a motion, seconded and a roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Council member(s) so request it, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

41-2026 Authorizing Refund of Redemption of Tax Sale Certificate #24-00001 for Block 108; Lot 6, 110 Upper Saddle River Road

WHEREAS, at the Municipal Tax Sale held on October 24, 2024, a lien was sold on Block 108, Lot 6, also known as 110 Upper Saddle River Road for 2024 Excess Sewer Usage fees; and,

WHEREAS, this lien, known as Tax Sale Certificate #24-00001, was sold to C & E Fund Trust 1 PO Box 5021, Philadelphia, PA 19111 at 0% interest rate and a premium in the amount of \$600.00; and

WHEREAS, the mortgage holder has affected redemption of Tax Sale Certificate #24-00001 in the amount of \$1,685.93; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that the Tax Collector be and is hereby authorized to Redeem Certificate #24-00001 in the amount of \$1,685.93 plus \$600.00 premium for a total amount of \$2,285.93 to C & E Fund Trust 1, PO Box 5021, Philadelphia, PA 19111

42-2026 Authorizing The Execution Of A Contract With Phoenix Advisors For Municipal Advisor And Continuing Disclosure Services

WHEREAS, the Borough of Montvale ("Borough") has identified the need for municipal advisor and continuing disclosure services to assist with financial consulting, compliance with SEC Rule 15c2-12, and related advisory needs; and

WHEREAS, Phoenix Advisors, located at 2000 Waterview Drive, Suite 101, Hamilton, NJ 08691, has demonstrated the necessary expertise and is duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB) to provide these services; and

WHEREAS, the proposed agreement outlines the terms, conditions, and compensation for services, including municipal advisor duties, continuing disclosure assistance, and other advisory services; and

WHEREAS, the fees for continuing disclosure services, as detailed in the agreement, are as follows:

- \$1,600 base fee for up to three (3) outstanding issues, plus \$150 for each additional outstanding obligation requiring filings;
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- \$500 per issue setup charge, discounted to \$200 per issue if Phoenix Advisors serves as the Municipal Advisor for the transaction;
- \$250 for each event filing made under the SEC's Event Disclosure Rule, waived if Phoenix Advisors is engaged as Municipal Advisor for the related transaction;
- \$250 for each Notice of Redemption related to an outstanding term bond maturity; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Administrator and Chief Financial Officer have reviewed the attached contract and recommend its approval to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and the Borough's financial objectives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that the attached contract between the Borough of Montvale and Phoenix Advisors for municipal advisor and continuing disclosure services, including the fees outlined above, is hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor, Borough Clerk, and other appropriate officials are hereby authorized and directed to execute the agreement on behalf of the Borough.

46-2026 Awarding a Professional Service Contract for the Position of Alternate Municipal Prosecutor for the Pascack Joint Municipal Court to Kellie M. Reyes, Esq.

WHEREAS, the Pascack Joint Municipal Court has a need to contract with a licensed attorney or firm to serve as an Alternate Municipal Prosecutor pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2B:24-1, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, the Pascack Municipal Court Committee agreed to acquire Attorney Services through the alternate process pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 or 20.5; and,

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Pascack Joint Municipal Court to appoint Kellie M. Reyes as Alternate Municipal Prosecutor; and

WHEREAS, compensation shall be included as part of the Operational Costs for the Pascack Joint Municipal Court as per the agreement between the participating municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall commence as of the date of this resolution, and shall continue for the remainder of the calendar year 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Certified Municipal Finance Officer has the availability of funds; and,

WHEREAS, the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1, et seq.) requires that the Resolution authorizing the award of contracts for "Professional Services" without competitive bids and Contracts must be available for public inspection.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale as follows:

1. This Contract is awarded without competitive bidding as a "Professional Service" in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a) of the Local Public Contracts Law, because the services are to be performed by a person authorized by law to practice a recognized profession.
2. The Contracts, including the terms of compensation for each professional, shall be placed on file with this resolution.
3. A Notice of this action shall be printed once in the official newspaper of the Borough.

47-2025 Amending Resolution No. 09-2026 Advertising in the Newspaper

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, N.J., that the following newspaper is hereby designated as the official newspaper for advertising for the Borough of Montvale for the year 2026: The Bergen Record – Hackensack, N.J.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, public notices will be available at <http://www.montvale.org/publicnotices> starting March 1, 2026, in compliance with P.L. 2025, c. 72

Introduced by: Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - a roll call was taken – all ayes

BILLS: Administrator read the Bill Report.

Motion to pay bills by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest - all ayes

REPORT OF REVENUE: Administrator read the Report of Revenue - December

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Council President Cudequest

Board of Health

Northwest Bergen Health Commission inspected 8 food establishments; 1 site plan approval for Café Corner, which was approved; BOH continues to audit nursery's and day cares for vaccine compliance; Rabies clinic is scheduled for November 7th

Seniors

The replacement of the Atrium floor should be completed in the coming week;

Library

The Montvale Supper Club has made over \$1200 with their dessert cookbook, additional copies are located at the circulation desk for \$15; planning is underway for different types of cooking classes and workshops that will be offered this coming year with a possibility of publishing an appetizer cookbook in the future; jewelry sale made over \$900; over 2600 patrons have attended adult programs

Councilmember Lane

Fire Dept

35 fires; 2 drills; 1 chief calls; 13 work details and 2 meetings; decorated the park for the Holidays and participated in Santa coming to town

Totals for the year are as follows:

348 fires; 25 drills; 41 chief calls; 79 work details and 13 meetings

Budget

Had first budget meeting; next meetings are on Zoom, Jan 12 and 26;

Councilmember Arendacs

No Report

Councilmember Koelling

Police

Monthly report included in original minutes;

Planning Board

Had their re-organization meeting;

Mayor Ghassali

Went to Trenton with Councilmembers Koelling and Arendacs to testify on affordable housing, to ask for a pause before the March 15 deadline which we will be forced to re-zone certain properties; if we don't we will lose our immunity and lose complete zoning powers; we were promised we would receive a decision by February 1; received some comments and questions regarding Wegmans collecting biometric data, in brief, the cameras collect facial data of persons of interest, to read the full statement go to the Wegmans website

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Nick Chelius

No Report

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: Dave Lafferty

Will be meeting with the new tenant of the Farm to go over their vision of the Farm

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Joe Voytus

Park Ridge and Woodcliff Lake both passed resolutions agreeing to the new funding formula for the Joint Court; flooring should be completed by the end of next week; tree trimming work is being done over the next couple of days at boro hall around the parking lot; had First amendment auditor visit, front office staff and clerk did a wonderful job responding and not reacting to being filmed, the OPRA request was submitted and will be filled in the timeframe allowed

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Council President Cudequest wanted an update on the lock boxes; she stated that she would help the seniors fill out the forms that are required from the Police Department; after a brief discussion it was decided to order approximately 200 to start

NEW BUSINESS:

None

COMMUNICATION CORRESPONDENCE:

none

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

HEARING OF CITIZENS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

Upon recognition by the Mayor, the person shall proceed to the floor and give his/her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the records. Unless further time is granted by the Council, he/she shall limit his/her statement to five (5) minutes. Statements shall be addressed to the Council as a body and not to any member thereof. No person, other than the person having the floor, shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, without recognition by the Mayor.

*Motion to open meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest
- all ayes*

No Public Comment

*Motion to close meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest
- all ayes*

MEETING CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC:

ADJOURNMENT:

*Motion to adjourn Public Meeting by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Council President Cudequest
- all ayes*

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm

Regular Workshop Meeting of the Mayor & Council to be held at 7:30pm on January 27, 2026

Budget Meeting Dates - on Zoom Only

January 12 @ 6:00 p.m.

January 26 @ 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Frances Scordo, Municipal Clerk