

**PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES**

The Public Meeting of the Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and called to order at 7:33PM. Adequate notification was published in the official newspaper of the Borough of Montvale. Master Sergeant Deiter 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 Ghassali; Borough Attorney, Dave Lafferty; Borough Engineer, Nick Chelius; Administrator, Joe Voytus; and Municipal Clerk, Fran Scordo

ROLL CALL:

Councilmember Arendacs - absent
Councilmember Cudequest
Councilmember Koelling

Council President Lane
Councilmember Roche
Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang -via telephone

ORDINANCES:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 2025-1584 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF A NEW JERSEY DOT LOCAL AID INFRASTRUCTURE FUND GRANT FOR THE MEMORIAL DRIVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$360,000 THEREFOR, AND PROVIDING FOR THE FUNDING OF SAID APPROPRIATION

A motion to Introduce Ordinance 2025-1584 for first reading was made by Councilmember Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Lane; Clerk read by title only; Councilmember Lane made a motion that this ordinance be passed on first reading and advertised in The Bergen Record; seconded by Councilmember Roche - a roll call was taken – all ayes

MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC:

Agenda Items Only

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

No Public Comment

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

MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC:

Agenda Items Only

MINUTES:

October 28, 2025

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

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE MINUTES:

None

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.

200-2025 Municipal Alliance Governor's Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Fiscal Grant

WHEREAS, the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse established the Municipal Alliances for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in 1989 to educate and engage residents, local government and law enforcement officials, schools, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in communities throughout New Jersey.

WHEREAS, The Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey recognizes that the abuse of alcohol and drugs is a serious problem in our society amongst persons of all ages; and therefore, has an established Municipal Alliance Committee; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council further recognizes that it is incumbent upon not only public officials but upon the entire community to take action to prevent such abuses in our community; and,

WHEREAS, the Borough Council has applied for funding to the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse through the County of Bergen;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey hereby recognizes the following:

1. The Borough Council does hereby authorize submission of a strategic plan for the Montvale Municipal Alliance grant for fiscal year 2027 in the amount of:

GCSUD Grant	\$ 3,836.33
Cash Match	\$ 959.08
In-Kind	<u>\$ 2,877.25</u>
Total Grant	\$ 7,672.66
2. The Borough Council acknowledges the terms and conditions for administering the Municipal Alliance grant, including the administrative compliance and audit requirements.

201-2025 Refund Tax Overpayment / Block 1405, Lot 13 – 35 Eagle Ridge - Ian J. Dunsdon

WHEREAS, a resolution authorizing the Tax Collector to refund an overpayment of taxes for the property located at 35 Eagle Ridge, also known as Block 1405, Lot 13;

WHEREAS, a duplicate payment was made by the homeowner; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, New Jersey, that the Tax Collector be and is hereby authorized to refund \$5,016.00 to Ian James Dunsdon, 35 Eagle Ridge, Montvale, NJ 07645

203-2025 Requesting Approval Of Items Of Revenue And Appropriation N.J.S.A. 40a:4-87 – Gateway BMED Fund – Wellness Program

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law, and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for an equal amount.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Borough Council of the Borough of Montvale, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local

Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the CY 2025 Municipal Budget in the sum of \$ 4,778.87, which is now available as revenue from:

Miscellaneous Revenues – Section F:

Special Items of Revenue Anticipated with Prior Consent of the Director of Local

Government Services – Public and Private Revenues Offset with Appropriations:

Gateway BMED Fund – Wellness Program (FCOA 10-887).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$ 4,778.87 is hereby appropriated under the caption:

General Appropriations:

(A) Operations – Excluded from “CAPS”

Public and Private Revenues Offset by Revenues

Gateway BMED Fund – Wellness Program (FCOA 41-887).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be electronically filed with the Director for approval as required by law.

204-2025 RE: Reinstatement Of Receivable And Recognition Of MRNA – NJ Dot Local Aid – Various Roads 2019

WHEREAS, the Borough of Montvale previously adopted Resolution No. 154-2025 on July 22, 2025, which included the closure of certain Current Fund receivables that were believed to be completed or fully realized at that time; and

WHEREAS, among those items was the receivable entitled “NJ DOT Local Aid – Various Roads 2019” in the amount of \$35,098.00; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has subsequently received a reimbursement from the New Jersey Department of Transportation in the amount of \$36,658.08 related to said project; and

WHEREAS, it is therefore necessary to reinstate the receivable in the amount of \$35,098.00 to properly record the grant reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, the remaining \$1,560.08 represents additional funds beyond the original receivable and should be recorded as Miscellaneous Revenue Not Anticipated (MRNA) in the Current Fund;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that:

- The Current Fund receivable entitled “NJ DOT Local Aid – Various Roads 2019” in the amount of \$35,098.00 is hereby reinstated to reflect reimbursement received from the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
- The Chief Financial Officer is authorized and directed to record the remaining \$1,560.08 as Miscellaneous Revenue Not Anticipated in the Current Fund.

205-2025 Cancellation Of Grant Receivable – NJ Dot Local Aid – Various Streets 2021

WHEREAS, the Borough of Montvale has on its books a Current Fund grant receivable entitled “NJ DOT Local Aid – Various Streets 2021” in the amount of \$15,943.51; and

WHEREAS, the project associated with said grant has been completed and all eligible costs have been received and recorded; and

WHEREAS, there remains no further balance due from the New Jersey Department of Transportation for this grant; and

WHEREAS, it is therefore necessary and appropriate to cancel the remaining receivable balance in the amount of \$15,943.51 from the Current Fund records;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that:

- The Current Fund grant receivable entitled “NJ DOT Local Aid – Various Streets 2021” in the amount of \$15,943.51 is hereby canceled.
- The Chief Financial Officer is authorized and directed to make the appropriate entries in the financial records to reflect this action.

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

202-2025 Authorizing Hiring Timothy Vander Berg, Part-Time Plumbing Subcode Official and Inspector, for the Construction Department

WHEREAS, Timothy Vander Berg meets the qualifications for the position of Plumbing Subcode Official and Inspector and agrees to the terms and conditions of employment, and has previously completed a satisfactory background investigation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Timothy Vander Berg shall be paid pro-rata based on an annual salary of \$37,238 with a work week of 15 hours.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLEVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, that the above-named individual is hereby appointed to the above position effective November 12, 2025

THIS RESOLUTION WAS WITHDRAWN

BILLS: *Administrator read the Bill Report*

Motion to pay bills by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Koelling - all ayes

REPORT OF REVENUE: *Administrator read the Report of Revenue – October*

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Council President Lane

Fire Dept

24 fire calls; 3 drills; 12 work details; 1 meeting - looking for new members ;

Finance

Budget will be held in January on Zoom; anyone can attend

Thanked everyone for their votes and happy to serve another 3 years

Councilmember Roche

Recreation

Halloween Carnival had another successful year; – Tree Lighting will be on December 5 at 7pm;

Chamber of Commerce

Feb 4th – Networking Event at Flemings

Street Fair is schedule for June 14 on Paragon Drive

Thanked all for re-election

Councilmember Cudequest

Library

Due to the increase in growth in Montvale more patrons have been taking advantage of all the programs the library offers; Looking for more board members;

Board of Health

Rabies Clinic was on Saturday, 62 vaccines given; meetings will start 7pm in 2026

Seniors

Had a trip to Resorts Casino on Nov 5th; the PBA sponsored Thanksgiving Luncheon is on Nov 20th; Seasons Holiday Luncheon is on Dec 2nd; took a poll about the lock boxes approximately 40-50 members would be interested; about 30 members would be interested in a paper copy of the newsletter

Councilmember Koelling

Police

Monthly report included in original minutes

Thanked Mayor for Veteran's Day breakfast at First Watch

Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang

Economic Committee

They had a successful corporate roundtable session this morning and good information was shared amongst all the participants.

Local School

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

Last week, we held parent-teacher conferences for the Montvale Schools. Parent-teacher conferences are an important opportunity to facilitate partnership between home and school in support of each child's success by discussing their academic and social-emotional progress.

Congratulations: *Congratulations to Alisha Foley on her reelection to the Montvale Board of Education and to Katharine "Kate" Arena on her election to the Montvale Board of Education. Both Alisha and Kate will be sworn in at the Board of Education Reorganization Meeting on January 5, 2026.*

From Dr. Petersen: *As we head into the holiday season, it is nice to pause and reflect on the many things for which we are thankful. The Montvale Schools is grateful for the wonderful relationship we have with Mayor Ghassali and the Town Council. We are thankful for our very supportive Board of Education. We are thankful for our students who come to school every day ready to learn—they give us all a daily reminder of what is important and why we are here*

We are thankful for the support of parents in creating an outstanding partnership for our students. We are thankful for the teachers, assistants, technology team, custodial team, child study team, support staff, nurses, lunchroom aides, and administrators who truly care about student achievement and have the best interests of our students at heart. We are also thankful for our volunteers who enthusiastically contribute so much to our school, especially our PTO and MEF. THANK YOU Everyone!!!!

Mayor

Congratulations to Tim Lane, Chris Roche, Kate Arena and Alisha Foley on winning the election; Working daily with affordable housing plans;

Municipal Clerk thanked all the Election Poll Workers for a job well done. It's a very long day and the poll workers ran it seamlessly.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Nick Chelius

Working on the revisions to the tax maps for the upcoming re-valuation; completed GIS mapping of the stormwater system

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: Dave Lafferty

At the last meeting the council awarded a Lease agreement to D'Agostino Landscaping for the farm property; the borough was served with a complaint challenging the award; our hearing is set for December 8th

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Joe Voytus

Veolia will be doing some water main work on Summit and Chestnut Ridge Road; at Fieldstone field, there appears to be an issue of areas of the turf being pulled up; it doesn't appear to be from an animal or of a natural wear; it may be from children pulling up the turf; Octagon House sign is being refurbish; working on a proposal to digitized the minute books from council, planning board and zoning board; which would make them all searchable; had a Zoom call with John Flanagan who does our newsletter, he will continue to provide us with it and will come up with a better option; along with the newsletter John also does short historic site videos; DPW advisory committee will be meeting at the league; Joint court advisory meeting will be held in early December; looking at option to upgrade the lightning detection system

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discussion – Set a date for Re-Org and Budget Meetings

January 1st at Noon; Budget meetings will be held on Zoom at 6pm January 5, 12, and 26

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 Councilmember Roche
- all ayes*

No Public Comment

*Motion to close meeting to the public by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche
- all ayes*

MEETING CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC:

ADJOURNMENT:

*Motion to adjourn Public Meeting by Councilmember Lane; seconded by Councilmember Roche
- all ayes*

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Regular Workshop Meeting of the Mayor & Council to be held at 7:30pm on Thursday, December 11, 2025

Respectfully submitted, Frances Scordo, Municipal Clerk