Minutes

Mayor and Municipal Council Regular Meeting
of the Township of Belleville at Council Chambers – Town Hall
152 Washington Avenue, Belleville, New Jersey,
Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order:
By Mayor Melham at 6:00pm

Members Present:
Council Members Vincent Cozzarelli, Naomy DePeña, Thomas Graziano, Diana Guardabasco, Tracey J. Muldrow, Frank Velez III, and Mayor Melham

Also Present:
Township Attorney Steven Martino, Township Manager Brian Banda, Police Chief Mark Minichini, Fire Chief John Olivieri, and Municipal Clerk Jacqueline Guaman

Pledge of Allegiance:
By Mayor Melham

Sunshine Law:
By Clerk Jacqueline Guaman

Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975) known as the Sunshine Law, notice of this regular meeting was published on Friday, January 9, 2026, edition of the Star Ledger. The Sunshine Law was compiled by adopting and forwarding to the press, posting and filling with the Municipal Clerk the annual resolution showing the date, time, and place of each meeting. A copy of the annual meeting notice has been posted on the Township website and Town Hall Bulletin Board.

Proclamations/Presentations:
Presented by Mayor Melham

A. Proclamation Presented to Firefighter/EMT's for Assisting with a newborn field delivery on January 21, 2026

Fire Chief Olivieri – I'm very proud of these gentlemen. We train every day, but real-life situations are the true test—and they were ready. Their preparation showed, and they made our department proud. Congratulations gentlemen.

Presented by Councilman Cozzarelli

B. Proclamation honoring the courageous service and legacy of Mr. Robert E. Pierce

Kevin Pierce – Thank you to the Township of Belleville and Council for this proclamation honoring my father. He carried his service with quiet humility, rarely speaking of it but living its values every day. Though those experiences impacted his health, he remained a man of service, courage, and faith.

Presented by Mayor Melham

C. Proclamation honoring the Belleville High School Girls Bowling Team: 2025-2026 Season

Coach Ryan Sheridan – Congratulations, girls, on a great accomplishment. Racquel finished as Essex County's top female bowler, improving from a 105 average as a freshman to 167 as a senior. Thank you to Racquel and the entire team—this program wouldn't be where it is without you. And thanks to the Mayor and Council for recognizing them today.

Executive Session:

Motion to go into closed session by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilman Cozzarelli.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 allows for a Public Body to go into closed session during a Public Meeting, and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body of the Township of Belleville has deemed it necessary to go into closed session to discuss certain matters which are exempted from the Public; and

WHEREAS, the regular meeting of this Governing Body will reconvene.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township of Belleville will go into closed session for the following reason(s) as outlined in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12:

Any matter which, by express provision of Federal Law, State Statute or Rule of Court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from discussion in public;

Any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the federal government;

Any matter the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy;

Any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions of which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of terms and conditions with employees or representatives of employees of the public body;

Any matter involving the purpose, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed;

Any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public, provided that their disclosure could impair such protection.

Any investigations of violations or possible violations of the law;

Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party.

Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer;

Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting;

Any deliberation of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty upon the responding party or the suspension or loss of a license or permit belonging to the responding party as a result of an act of omission for which the responding party bears responsibility;

Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, disciplinary action unless individual in writing requests a public meeting;

Any deliberations of the public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of specific civil penalty.

The Executive Session shall be to discuss litigation, negotiations and/or personnel, including but not limited to the following:

- Litigation – "Rent Leveling BOARD"
- Settlement agreement with JC Bell, LLC

Motion to exit out of closed session by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Work Session/Council Discussion:

Mayor Melham

A. NJ Film Ready Ordinance Update

- Belleville is a hub for motion picture scenery and Belleville has an ordinance that sets our fee schedule for when a production company comes in town.
- Township is invited to participate in NJ Film Ready, a five-step certification program, which means that the Motion Picture Association will prepare municipalities to host motion picture and television productions by sharing useful information with local leaders on filming operations needed to support production.
- At this stage we've had two meetings in the past, now we have another one coming up and the personnel to represent the Township will be determined by Manager Brian.

- Motion Picture Association will look at our current ordinance and compare it to the film industry to ensure our ordinance is up to par at market rate, if not they will make suggestions and our ordinance will reflect that.
- Expect an ordinance in the future to amend our current film fee ordinance to match what NJ Film Ready has recommended.
- Councilman Cozzarelli and I discussed in the future we want to look at redoing some of the hours of operation. I thought it was going to be on for today, but it wasn't.

Brian Banda – Township Manager

A. Belleville Jitney Service PILOT program

- For the hours of operation, we have one more internal discussion then we'll bring it to Council at a meeting and move forward.
- This came about when the redevelopment project began along Washington Avenue to improve public transit and reduce traffic congestion.
- The Jitney service will run along Washington Avenue through Belleville and Franklin, then to Silver Lake Station and on to Penn Station, providing convenient access for residents, especially those without a vehicle.
- Program will be funded by our redevelopment projects and the grant committee sat down with Easy Ride which is money from…?
- The shuttle will run all week, connecting passengers to the light rail, which provides direct service to Penn Station.
- The shuttle will pick up Belleville residents for $2 per trip, with a 50% discount for seniors and people with disabilities, making it a valuable resource for the community.
- Over the 3-year pilot, this plan will test the service to see if it is effective and successful.
- The cost over the 3-year period = $800,00.00. With the grant, the town is to provide a 25% match so that's $265,00.
- We have sufficient funds from the redevelopment projects to cover the cost of the Jitney service.
- The grant team recommends giving this service a try, and if it proves successful, we'll continue it.
- Additional fees may be collected in the future, and we could negotiate with larger developments regarding Jitney stops.
- Residents fee will be $2 per trip or $70 monthly.
- That's correct, Mayor. For example, as you mentioned, the Rev has already contributed $348,000 toward this service, and Essex contributed $208,000, so we have significant funds allocated to support it.
- We're not creating any other offices or stipends.
- The Jitney company will serve as the point of contact. The township will designate the stops, and they will plan and manage the entire program. They are also developing an app where users can buy tickets and track the schedule.
- Yes, before the launch, we'll share all the details on how the service will work for residents and proceed from there.
- Recreation is handling Dial-A-Ride because the Rec. is handling the senior center.
- I wouldn't say we need it, but it makes Belleville more attractive to residents commuting to the city and to people looking to buy property, thanks to this convenient service.

- Based on the proposal, the shuttle will operate on weekdays from 6:00am-9:30am and 4:00pm to 8:00pm, running every 30 minutes. And there's going to be 2 shuttles.

Councilman Cozzarelli:

- It's a 3-year grant with about 75/25% split.
- In addition to stopping at the developments, we're considering adding stops at municipal parking lots to create a park-and-ride option, allowing people to park, pay the meter, and travel into the city.
- Also, the town would not purchase the bus or hire the driver; we would simply contract a company to manage the buses, including costs and maintenance.
- I would assume this would be coordinated through the Health Department in conjunction with the Dial-A-Ride program or would that be through your department Manager?

Mayor Melham:

- So just to recap this Jitney Service not being paid for by taxpayers.
- This is funded by the developments themselves, which contribute a community fee negotiated by the redevelopment team with each new developer.
- The Jitney service is intended for residents of the new buildings on Washington Avenue and is not funded by taxpayer dollars; Belleville residents can use it for $2 per ride.
- I'm glad you mentioned that—we won't need a coordinator to manage the program. This is a self-sufficient service, with a third-party company handling operations using the developer funds we've set aside.
- The Dial-A-Ride program was moved from the Health Department to the Recreation Department.
- Without the development, we wouldn't need a Jitney service. But with the development, we now have a developer-funded service that also benefits the community—residents can ride for just $2.

Councilman Graziano:

- Manager Brian, who will serve as the point of contact for this service and handle documenting the routes, processes, and all preparations before the Jitney service begins?
- Will that information be shared with the Township?

Councilman Velez:

- Regarding the schedule, do we have a proposal? Will it run seven days a week, with different weekends and weekday times? Will it run every half-hour, hourly, or just around peak commute times?

Frank DiMaria – Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

A. Discuss General Capital Ordinance

- It was scheduled for the April 28th regular council meeting to introduce 7 ordinances, four of them general capital and three of them water capital.
- These are ordinances needed to get through the year.
- These ordinances are comprised of municipal facilities, sanitary sewer improvements, acquisition of machinery and equipment, and local road curb sidewalk replacement improvement program.
- These are all the same as prior years, except for the Local Road Curb and Sidewalk Replacement Improvement Program.

- Manager Brian proposed adding $100,000 to the Local Road Curb and Sidewalk Ordinance for streetscaping, so we'll obtain a price based on the linear footage.

B. Discuss Water Capital Ordinance

- We have a recurring $250,000 for water repairs.
- Water meter replacements have been moved from operating to capital, as funding them through the operating budget would put too much pressure on it, and they clearly qualify as a capital expense.
- An additional $5 million for phase two of the lead line replacement program. The program we're required to use through IBank.
- For those unfamiliar with the Weise Act, any environmental infrastructure project over $1 million must be financed through the IBank—you can't self-finance.
- We have about $30 million in lead line replacements to complete within 3.5 square miles and are currently about 20% done.
- We've closed on our first IBank loan, with 50% as low-interest financing, and will continue this process to meet the 2030 deadline.
- That will take care of all the potable water lines and the meters.
- These are scheduled for introduction on April 28th meeting.

Mayor Melham:

- You may receive an email from the library regarding work that needs to be done outside the building on Academy Street.

Report of the Manager:

- Fairway Park is 99% complete, waiting on warmer temperature so we can do the basketball court topping.
- Community garden at Fairway Park - April 18th for those who purchase a lot
- Registration for plots is available on township website.
- Friendly house floor has 4 days left of work to do (boards, ramps, and installation of volleyball posts).
- Food truck park is on hold until PSE&G bring the service, we'll put more pressure on them.
- Santander parking lot, the snow has mostly been removed. No flooding incurred, it went straight to our sewer systems.
- Working on a contractor via co-op to get improvements underway and if all goes well in a month it should be complete.
- Police building renovation, bathrooms and locker rooms are almost finished, hoping to be done sometime next week.
- DPW Director will go out to get pricing for the leaky stairwell.
- Fire training tower almost finished - foundation is being installed & prefab structure expected to arrive in April.
- PSE&G Pole removal on Washington Ave. is complete.
- PSE&G will give updates as the work continues to progress.
- 191 Belmont Ave. – we have two quotes for the townhall annex. 1st quote = 2.1 million, 2nd quote = 1.8 million.
- Waiting for the final quote - expectations are to be lower than previous estimates.

- Project intended to start in the fall soon as Belleville agrees on a quote.
- Silverlake, police mobile precinct, goes live Monday, March 30, 2026.
- Security measures are being put in place in the lower lot in Belleville after a town hall vehicle theft.
- Edmonds update – training has been pushed back to June 1st; there were some delays which put us behind schedule.
- Considering leasing more of the railroad space to businesses alongside the tracks for more parking.
- Maps are complete, now putting in an application to the railroad for a few locations.
- After the leasing is complete, we can move onto municipal parking or subleasing to businesses.
- In 2025 PSE&G agreed to provide the town with $150,000 for trees along the Carmer Ave. power plant.
- Once funds are received, we can start the project.
- Downside - it is the responsibility of residents to plant trees if they want it.
- We can use the funds for planting around town, not specifically Carmer Ave. alone.
- Railway repaving projects go out to bid in May.
- Budget committee -191 Terry Street, resolution to transfer ownership convenes tonight.
- Recommend filling existing yet unfilled battalion chief role within the current TO.
- Battalion chief role will reduce overtime.
- A fire provider position that opens will be on hold until there's money for it.
- Grant Committee - LRIG grant, the Division of Pocket Park and dog park spaces due for upgrades this spring.
- New grant opportunity in the works for the NJDCA Management Enhancement Review Program – allows consultant for shared services, operations and reduced costs.
- Application made for congressional grant of $3 million for support in financing our grandstands revitalization project.
- Senior Advisory Board – membership has reached 208 people, new membership photo IDs coming soon.
- Street sweeping begins - March 31st.
- Bag, leaf and branch pickup – April 6th.
- DPW – Belleville qualify for the Tree City USA – sixth year in a row.
- The park will open to the public once the work is complete.

Mayor Melham:

- Was there any catastrophic flooding?
- This was the project we voted on in June of 2025 and they're still pushing the date back. I predicted this to everybody.
- Will the contract expire before we get the product or does it start when we take ownership?
- Did not hear update about labor contract negotiations.

Frank DiMaria – CFO:

- When we take ownership of the point-of-sale system.

Councilman Velez:

- Manager Brian, can you give update about the park between Mary and Emmett Street?

Attorney Martino

- Point of Order Council - it is not best practice to speak on labor contracts in a public setting. These matters should be addressed in closed session. I advise Council to refrain from speaking on this topic in public.

Report of the Mayor:

- Saturday, 3/28/26 – Easter Egg Hunt at 1:00pm. 2:00-4:00pm is the main event.
- Tuesday, 3/31/26 – street cleaning will resume so pay attention to signs and the schedule.
- Saturday, 4/11/26 – Arbor Day from 9:00am – 12:00pm at the municipal stadium complex.
- Saturday 4/11/26 – Meet the Team event at Silver Lake Substation 11:00am – 2:00pm.
- Sunday 4/12/26 – Essex County Cherry Blossoms 10K & at 1:00pm is the street naming for former Mayor Angie Pietrusza, corner of Harrison and Kimball.
- Saturday, 4/25/26 – Belleville Recreation Opening Day.

Past events:

- I attended the Essex County Cherry Blossom press conference.
- Irish Flag Raising was held on Friday, 3/6/26 as well as the annual rabies clinic at the Belleville Fire House.
- Community garden plots are available for sale.
- Rec. department has swag available on township website.

Approval of Minutes:

Clerk Jacqueline Guaman

- December and January – Pending
- February 11, 2026
- February 24, 2026
- March 11, 2026

Motioned by Councilwoman Guardabasco; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Mayor Melham:

- Either Manager or Clerk, do we have an update on December 2025 and January 2026 minutes?

Clerk Jacqueline Guaman:

- They're pending.

Manager Brian:

- It's being edited and will be on for the next session.

Communications:

Clerk Jacqueline Guaman

A. Correspondence from Mayor Melham appointing Mr. Raphael Toboclaon to serve as a Trustee on the Belleville Public Library Board

Ordinances for Introduction:

ORDINANCE #13-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, CHAPTER 8-2.8, PARKING DURING EMERGENCIES

Motion by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #14-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, CHAPTER 8-2.2, PARKING PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES ON CERTAIN STREETS

Motion by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #15-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, CHAPTER 8-2.2, BY ADDING PARKING PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES ON CERTAIN STREETS

Motion by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Mayor Melham:

- These are literally the same ordinances, any reason why they are separate?
- I'm just curious because we don't need two of the same ordinances if there are no difference.

Clerk Guaman:

- Different streets and ordinance #15-26 is adding streets, but the title is the same.

Attorney Martino:

- Ones amending streets that already have some parking prohibited and the other is for new streets, they're two different things.

ORDINANCE #16-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, NEW JERSEY, CHAPTER 8-16, ENTITLED "HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES," BY REMOVING CERTAIN DESIGNATED HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES

Motion by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #17-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 12, ARTICLE 12-16 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE

Motion by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Ordinances for Public Hearing and Second and Final Hearing:

ORDINANCE #72-25 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY, CHAPTER 8-2C, RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMITS AREAS
Motion to Open Public Comments by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

- Public Comment: None

Motion to Close Public Comments and Adopt Ordinance #72-25 by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #73-25 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, COUNTY OF ESSX, NEW JERSEY, CHAPTER 8-6A, STOP SIGN INTERSECTION DESIGNATED
Motion to Open Public Comments by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

- Public Comment: None

Motion to Close Public Comments and Adopt Ordinance #73-25 by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #10-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, NEW JERSEY, CHAPTER 8-16, ENTITLED HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES
Motion to Open Public Comments by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

- Public Comment: None

Motion to Close Public Comments and Adopt Ordinance #10-26 by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #11-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 40, ENTITLED "FEES"
Motion to Open Public Comments by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Public Comment:
Vincent Frantantoni – 129 Mount Prospect Ave.

- What fees are we talking about here? Are the parking meter fees included?

Mayor Melham:

- This ordinance refers to all recreation fees, the ones that are changing are the summer camp fees.
- No parking meter fees.

Motion to Close Public Comments and Adopt Ordinance #11-26 by Councilwoman Guardabasco; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

ORDINANCE #12-26 ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BELLEVILLE, COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY AMENDING THE BELLEVILLE TOWNSHIP CODE RELATING TO THE TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAM PURSUANT TO THE FIVE-YEAR EXEMPTION AND ABATEMENT LAW, N.J.S.A. 40A:21-1 ET SEQ
Motion to Open Public Comments by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

- Public Comment: None

Motion to Close Public Comments and Adopt Ordinance #12-26 by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman Guardabasco.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Public Comments:
Motion to Open Public Comments by Councilwoman DePeña; Seconded by Councilman Velez.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano, Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez, and Mayor Melham
Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Philomena Frantantoni- 129 Mount Prospect Ave.

- Any correspondence about the light by Shoprite?
- Let's put a little pressure on them.
- How come the meters in the municipal lots are 24 hours? In other towns, meter parking ends at 6pm.

- This is going to hurt the businesses in town. People are going to go to other towns because restaurants don't have any parking.
- The light by the laundromat near Belleville Pizza, did they ever get that light fixed by the street to shine into the parking lot?

Manager Brian:

- I didn't think we were doing anything about it until the State finishes Washington Avenue.
- Mayor the street parking still ends at 6:00pm.
- We'll check to see if the light has been fixed.

Mayor Melham:

- Brian, this goes back to residents parking overnight in the lots, certain businesses for example, next door have their customers parking in the municipal lot all hours long.
- Phillys does the restaurant really have parking if residents are parking their cars and not leaving until the morning? The restaurant doesn't have parking.
- No charge on Sundays.
- Street parking still ends at 6:00pm. It's only the municipal lots.

Councilwoman Guardabasco:

- Do they charge on the weekends?

<u>Vincent Frantantoni</u> – 129 Mount Prospect Ave.

- Mayor Melham, I read your article in The Observer about being doxed and your dissatisfaction with the decision of the Essex County Prosecutor office not to pursue charges against the perpetrator. I'm also a victim of those two issues.
- Altered photos of me were posted which I shared with the Police Chief.
- Another unrelated issue, the prosector's office declined to prosecute criminal acts against me even though the evidence was conclusive.
- I want Council to listen to two tapes of an interesting conversation.
- That speaker is the former Councilman of Belleville, Dr. Frank Noonan.
- On those tapes he called me to apologize for the plan that the town council conspired to have me arrested in 1992.
- For months I questioned the Council as to why the cardboard recycling program I created as a commissioner was abandoned and the cardboard was going into the waste stream at $102/ton.
- Dr. Noonan stated that Council was in cahoots before the meeting to have me arrested.
- I was arrested and convicted in Glen Ridge and appealed it in the County, but Judge Degnan was in with the council at the time, so it didn't get anywhere. I got no justice.
- The attorney advised me that the evidence I had was a slam dunk lawsuit, however he wanted a large retainer since this case could take months or even years to resolve.
- Years gone by and like you mayor, no prosecution or justice. It's all corruption, I go through the same thing.
- Karma comes for all of us, many of the former council got what came to them and fortunately, the last member is here tonight with us.

Mayor Melham:

- You want to give us a transcript of what we heard because it was loud.

Manager Brian:

- An update for Mrs. Frantantoni last concern, DPW informed me the light by the laundromat has been reported to PSE&G and we are waiting for them to repair it.

Jonathon Walker- 46 Eugene Place.

- A new company who handles sanitation has not been disposing of the trash properly. They are leaving residual trash all over Eugene Pl. and it looks unkept.
- Parking on Eugene Pl. is atrocious where residents can't even park.
- A resident down the street is taking up 6 parking spaces for cars who need repairs and are for sale.
- A neighbor requested a handicapped parking sign in front of her house and has never used it. She has a driveway and is simply taking up space.
- Hopefully with Council hearing this we can come to some sort of resolution because this is ridiculous and its inconveniencing everyone who lives on Eugene.

Mayor Melham:

- We meet once a month at night so rather than waiting until the next council meeting in the future, please feel free to send an email to the Manager or myself, we're very responsive.
- As far as parking, we are considering permit parking as pilot programs in several areas of town.

Manager Brian:

- Please send an email tomorrow with that address and code enforcement and police will go out there to inspect.

Kimberly Heredia – 46 Eugene Place.

- I've called the police department and DPW about handicapped parking/commercial parking itself and nothing gets done.
- The residents on Eugene Pl. try to keep our street as clean as possible but there's only so much, we can do.
- This is our first meeting, and we do plan to email.
- Well can you put Eugene in the ordinance?

Mayor Melham:

- These ordinances that were just adopted tonight, 73 handicap parking spaces will be removed and with our new procedure, residents will need to renew annually and provide proper documentation.
- I'm not sure if Eugene is included in those 73 spaces. If not Chief, you'll have to add it.
- The Manager runs the day-to-day operations so you can send him the email.

Mario Drozdz – 95 Bell Street.

- Several years ago, after a heated Council meeting, someone put my name and address on an apartment rental app, and strangers were coming up to me to ask about renting a room.
- Can you explain what Resolutions #127-2026 and #128-2026 are about?
- OPRA – I requested a particular vehicle, the maintenance records, and I figured out that it was being sent to the wrong department. It should've been going to Public Works.
- Frank, you told me next time you send an OPRA request, do not put a name or department, just put the plate number and it should go to DPW.

- So, you're saying with all these vehicles in town, don't anybody know when the last oil change was?
- Maybe that's why the vehicles aren't lasting.
- Anyway, can I get an answer on Resolution #127-2026 and #128-2026?

Mayor Melham:

- I respect CFO Frank DiMaria and I would have to disagree.
- The Clerk's Office would have received that OPRA request, and they distribute it to the correct department.
- That may be fair to say.

Attorney Steve Martino:

- Resolution #127-2026 and #128-2026 is for the Terry Street property. It's the transfer of the redevelopment agreement and the financial agreement to a new owner.
- OPRA - requests are typically received by the Clerk's Office and forwarded to the appropriate department. If the Clerk's Office responds that no records exist, then no records are available.

Carmela Fleischmann – 833 Main Street.

- What's going on with Main Street?
- The Washington Avenue project. When will it be completed because the street is still damaged and there are potholes and bumps all over the place. Any updates?
- Can you explain again about the trees being planted around town, I missed that.
- Lovely, but who's going to maintain said trees because in the past we planted trees, but the issue is they are never taken care of. No need to keep planting trees if the town isn't going to take care of them. I don't want to keep looking at dead trees.
- If we can investigate that I appreciate it.

Mayor Melhem:

- Brian, can you explain Washington Avenue and Main Street project?
- I think the new trees, the issue is the salt kills them, especially those that are close to the curb.

Manager Brian:

- Washington Avenue project - handled by the State, we can't do anything about that, we just have to wait until they're finished.
- Main Street – they will be going out for bid soon.
- The money for those trees came from PSE&G for the Carmer Ave. power plant. We plant trees specifically in that area but if the town doesn't want to, we are free to plant the trees elsewhere in town.

Motion to Close Public Comments by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano. Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez and Mayor Melham.
Nayes: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

Resolutions:

Motion to Approve and Adopt Consent Agenda by Councilman Velez; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.

Ayes: Cozzarelli, DePeña, Graziano. Guardabasco, Muldrow, Velez and Mayor Melham.
Nayes: None Absent: None Abstain: None Motion Carries

RESOLUTION #123-2026 AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER TO ISSUE CHECKS IN PAYMENTS OF BILLS FROM VARIOUS ACCOUNTS

RESOLUTION #124-2026 CANCELLING OPEN TAX BALANCE ON 453-457 WASHINGTON AVENUE TAX EXEMPT PROPERTY ACCORIDNG TO N.J.S.A.54:4-3.6

REOSLUTION #125-2026 AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTION AND REFUNDING ON A DWELLING HOUSE OF AN APPROVED DISABLED VETERAN
RESOLUTION #126-2026 PROCLAMATION HONORING THE COURAGEOUS SERVICE AND LEGACY OF MR. ROBERT E. PIERCE

RESOLUTION #127-2026 AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A FOURTH AMENDMENT, TRANSFER AND CONSENT TO TRANSFER OF REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 91 TERRY STREET ABD 371-381 CORTLANDT STREET

RESOLUTION #128-2026 RESLUTION CONSENTING TO THE TRANSFER OF THE FINANCIAL AGREEMENT CONCERNING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 91 TERRY STREET AND 371-381 CORTLANDT STREET

REOSLUTION #129-2026 AUTHORIZING TAX EXEMPTION AND REFUNDING ON A DWELLING HOUSE OF AN APPROVED DISABLED VETERAN

RESOLUTION #130-2026 AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF THE BELLEVILLE MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE STRATEGIC PLAN AND GRANT APPLICATION TO THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (GCSUD) FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

RESOLUTION #131-2026 PROCLAMATION HONORING THE BELLEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BOWLING TEAM, 2025-2026 SEASON

RESOLUTION #132-2026 RESOULTION RELEASING THE QUICK CHECK PERFORMANCE BOND

RESOLUTION #133-2026 APPROVING INITIAL TAXICLUB AND LIVERY LICENSE FOR THE TERM OF MARCH 24, 2026 – AUGUST 28, 2026

RESOLUTION #134-2026 RESOLUTION AGREEMENT WITH JC BELL, LLC

New Business:
DePeña – Thank you everyone for supporting the community baby shower that we celebrated on March 8, 2026, especially the Township employees.

Adjournment:
Motion to Adjourn at 7:54pm by Councilman Cozzarelli; Seconded by Councilwoman DePeña.
All-In-Favor

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacqueline E. Guaman, R.M.C.
Township Clerk

The next Work Session Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, 2026, at 12:30pm is cancelled.
The next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 6:00pm.