

CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES

March 4, 2025

5:00 P.M.

***MEETING WAS HELD VIA "ZOOM" APPLICATION WITH MEETING ID 349 802 0449

Mayor Jakubowski called the meeting to order.

MAYOR'S STATEMENT: "Notice of this meeting has been provided in a legal notice published in the Courier Post and the Retrospect; and posted in accordance with Title 10 of the New Jersey Statutes Annotated, specifying a 5:00 p.m. meeting time; and that formal action may or may not be taken at all Caucus and Commissioners meetings. Please be advised that this meeting is not being videotaped tonight."

Flag Salute/Exit Designations

Roll Call: Mayor Jakubowski and Commissioner Lee were in attendance. Commissioner Whitman was absent.

Those additionally in attendance were Solicitors Sal Siciliano and Jennifer McPeak, Tom Tassi, Police Chief, Borough Engineer Craig Reilly, Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk, Jack Bruno, CFO, Jean Phillips, Court Administrator, John Dymond, Tax Assessor, Kurt Bicking, OEM, Akiema Buchanan, Library Director, Brian Conte, EMS. Pat Slemmer Police Chief, RJ Callaway, Assistant Superintendent of Public Works, Megan Giordano, Tax Collector

Joe Henry, Hardenbergh Insurance, joined the meeting for his annual safety presentation. This year's topic was Heat Injury and Stress Prevention.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to approve meeting minutes from February 18, 2025, seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor-motioned carried.

ORDINANCES FOR ACTION: N/A

RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION:

RESOLUTION 2025-54 Resolution to apply for funding from the Governor's Council on Substance Use Disorder (GCSUD) for the Implementation and Continuation of Camden County's Municipal Alliance Program for the Fiscal Grant Cycle July 2025-2026. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor motion carried. Commissioner Whitman absent.

RESOLUTION 2025-55 Authorizing the Refund of 1st Quarter 2025 Property Taxes to the Mortgage Company due to the Tax Assessor Granting a Totally Disabled Veteran Status for Block 128, Lot 16. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote. Commissioner Whitman absent.

RESOLUTION 2025-56 Authorizing the Refund of 1st Quarter 2025 Property Taxes to the Mortgage Company due to the Tax Assessor Granting a Totally Disabled Veteran Status for Block 128, Lot 8. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote. Commissioner Whitman absent.

RESOLUTION 2025-57 Authorizing the Cancellation of 2025 Property Taxes due to the Tax Assessor Granting a Totally Disabled Veteran Status for Block 126, Lot 8. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote. Commissioner Whitman absent.

RESOLUTION 2025-58 Authorizing the Borough of Audubon to submit a proposal to the Borough of Stratford for Municipal Court Shared Services. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor motion carried. Commissioner Whitman absent.

RESOLUTION 2025-59 Authorizing the Signatures of the Appointed/Approved Personnel to the Borough of Audubon's Banking Institutions. The foregoing resolution was approved by motion of Commissioner Lee and seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. Unanimous Roll Call Vote. Commissioner Whitman absent.

Department Reports:

Borough Administrator – The Borough Administrator has retired.

Assistant Superintendent of Public Works – Report submitted. The long winter is coming to an end, hopefully. We had a couple of snowstorms and large windstorms over the last couple of months. We are worked on the Village Court Pump Station. The generator was installed with the help of Bach & Associates. Looking to get the landscaping equipment out and the street sweeper. Will be working on the mulch and getting ready for Audubon Day as well as turf field management. Working on a couple of grants with The Aubrey Group as well.

Chief Finance Officer – Would like to introduce budget calendar and recommending introducing on April 1 and adoption on May 20. Per S. Siciliano, Attorney, that will not be possible because of the election on May 13. There will be a new governing body in office by then. It needs to be introduced and voted on by this governing body or wait until the election for the new governing body to introduce and vote.

The reason for the later date, was due to a few items outstanding that are pretty impactful to the budget. The Stratford court will be important for the budget. If our RFP is accepted that would be ideal, but if not, the budget will need to be revisited.

The budget will be introduced at Caucus on April 1. The meeting is at 7:00 pm in person. We will add a public comment session to our agenda for the Commissioners' meeting on April 15, but the formal public hearing and hopefully adoption of the budget will be at Caucus on May 6 at 5:00 pm.

Borough Clerk – Reminder April's Caucus meeting is now in person at 7:00 pm. Municipal Election is Tuesday, May 13, 2025. There will be no early voting in Municipal Election. Deadline to register to vote is April 22. Deadline to apply for a Mail-in Ballot by mail is May 6. Primary election changed to Tuesday, June 10, 2025. All animals (dogs and cats) must be registered by March 31 annually. Rabies must be up to date.

Tax Collector – Report submitted. All is going smoothly. Sewer bills are going out this week. Next meeting there will be resolution to assign a municipal lien from one of our properties to a lien holder so the property can foreclose and possibly become a viable home for someone.

Tax Assessor – Nothing to report.

Police Chief - Report submitted. I will be retiring at the end of March. The new chief is ready to go. The transition process is for all those that anticipated moving up and they are all trained and ready. We are in the last process of Captain Bauer to do all signatures for fire arms etc. under Title 40 and all that I was responsible for. It is about 90% complete at this moment.

Mayor Jakubowski expressed his appreciation and thank you to all of Chief Tassi's service.

Commissioner Lee expressed the same. It has been great to work with Chief Tassi and look forward to showing our appreciation more in the near future for his many years of service.

Fire Chief – Report submitted. Answered in Audubon in February: 32 Alarms answered to date: 87 Completed our annual health and wellness fitness exams. Transferring from our cold-water gear to our water rescue gear. If you see us out there, know that we are training. We will try to keep everyone updated on our Facebook page so you are not alarmed. Completed the apparatus health and maintenance and it will need a few repairs. Will keep everyone up to date.

OEM – Report submitted. Team's meeting with IEM, the EOP vendor, on March 17 at 10:00 am. An invite went out to all department heads.

EMS – Report submitted. Audubon 67 calls with a total call for 161 for the month. Congrats to Chief Tassi on his retirement. You have been a great wealth of knowledge, support and friend over the years and will be very much missed.

Municipal Court Administrator – Reports submitted. Nothing else to report.

Construction Code/Zoning Report - Reports submitted.

Engineer – Report submitted. Submitted the FY2025 CDBG application for resurfacing of various Borough roads including sections of Oakland Ave, Taylor Ave and Wright Alley prior to the March 3, 2025 deadline. Should hear back in the fall about the grant awards. FY2024 CDGB previously reported that we were going to get the roof redone at the Senior Center, but after conversations with the county, we found out that project is not eligible. So, we are focusing on the first-floor lobby renovations. For that grant FY2024 Open Space, the all-accessible playground equipment for Audubon Family Park has been ordered and could take six weeks and we are hoping to have that in before Audubon Day. Will keep you posted.

Solicitor – Nothing to report.

Library – Report submitted. Monthly calendar is on website and social media. Makers Day is March 22, 2025 10:00 – 2:00 pm. This is a statewide event that celebrates, promotes and many cases may introduce maker culture. The library is partnering with Sustainable Audubon for this event. March 29 is the clothing swap. Accepting gently used women's clothes. Sign up for the library's email newsletter.

FJW Recreation & Community Center - YMCA registration is open. Details are on our website and social media. Camp runs June 23 through August 29. February - Six private parties March (Scheduled) Three (3) private parties and three (3) non-profit events.

Sustainable Audubon – Report submitted. Flower sale is ongoing. Orders are due April 10. Proceeds benefit the street tree initiate. Camden County Certified Gardeners are doing a talk on Wednesday, March 26 about native plants. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 5 at 7 pm

Board of Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Lee – April 1 meeting is in person because we will be swearing in our new Chief, Captain and Lieutenant and possibly have a new hire by then.

Commissioner Whitman – Absent

Mayor Jakubowski – The League of Municipalities hosts an essay contest every year and the deadline is this Friday, March 7 and you must be a Junior or Senior in High School. The mayor does not make the decision on the winner.

Heard RJ mention grants. We have a new grant consulting group that is working with all departments and it has been very productive thus far.

In closed caucus last month, we discussed the possibility of using part of our Senior Center for the preschool as they need more space. That involved conversation with HUD. HUD has been funding the renovation on the Senior Center. We were prepared to move forward, but after inspection the County Superintendent's Office which is the State's Department of Education, due to our renovations of the bathrooms recently they are no longer acceptable for preschoolers and our rooms are just not big enough. As much as we wanted to help out, we cannot add to that building right now. We wish them luck because it is a big need.

Open Session: Commissioner Lee made a motion to open the meeting to the public; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor; motion carried.

No comments from the public.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to close the meeting to the public; seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor motion carried.

Commissioner Lee made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:34 pm.



Mayor Jakubowski



Commissioner Lee

ABSENT

Commissioner Whitman

ATTEST:



Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk

DATE APPROVED :

