

CAUCUS MEETING MINUTES
BOROUGH OF AUDUBON
September 1, 2026
5:00 P.M.

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, Commissioner Wendell were in attendance. Commissioner Alemi was absent.

Those in attendance were Danielle Ingves, Administrator/Municipal Clerk, Captain Gaspari, Borough Engineers S. Bach & C. Riley, DPW Superintendent RJ Callaway, Tax Collector M. Giordano, Tax Assessor K. Schwesig, Solicitors S. Siciliano and J. McPeak, Construction/Zoning TA N. Bicking, Jean Phillips Municipal Court Administrator, B. Conte EMS, Battalion Chief DeVoe.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL: The foregoing motion was made to approve meeting minutes from Caucus on August 4, 2026 as well as closed session from August 4, 2026 by Commissioner Wendell, seconded by Mayor Jakubowski. All in favor motion carried.

ORDINANCES FOR ACTION: N/A

RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION:

Resolution 2026:160 -- Authorizing the Approval of a Social Affairs Permit for Tavistock Hills Swim Club for October 17, 2026 at the Francis J. Ward Recreation & Community Center, 602 Hampshire Ave. The foregoing motion was made by Commissioner Wendell; seconded by Commissioner Alemi. All in favor motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Borough Administrator/Municipal Clerk – Report submitted

Audit - Finalization of the audit with the Borough's auditors is nearing completion.

Meeting Date Reminder - The Administrator reminded all present that the Board of Commissioners' meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, at 7:00 p.m., and not on Tuesday, September 15.

Joint Insurance Fund (JIF) - The Borough, BA and Super PW, met with the JIF for its annual exposure review. The meeting was productive and no issues were identified.

Bond – Moving forward with digitizing records and purchasing computers and printers as needed.

General Election – Vote-by-Mail

- No new instructions have been issued regarding mail-in ballots.
- Several residents have expressed concern and sought to rescind their mail-in ballot requests. The deadline to do so was understood to be the date of this meeting.
- Residents who receive a mail-in ballot may still vote in person, either during early voting or at the polls on Election Day, by provisional ballot.
- The Administrator will update the Borough website and social media to inform residents of these alternatives. Camden County does not anticipate problems with mail-in ballots.
- Given concerns about U.S. Postal Service reliability, residents who receive a mail-in ballot are strongly encouraged to use the secure drop box outside Borough Hall. There are 29 drop boxes throughout Camden County, all under camera surveillance.

Early Voting

- Early voting will run from October 24 through November 1.
- Mail-in ballots are expected to be sent out on or about September 19.
- The Administrator will provide a further report on early voting in the coming months.

Public Works – Report submitted

Hazardous Material Disposal - The truck contaminated with hazardous material was properly and securely emptied the previous day. The reporting official accompanied one of the drivers to the site. Camden County Hazmat and the DEP were notified. Appreciation was extended to all parties involved, with particular thanks to Camden County Hazmat for its responsiveness and guidance throughout.

Senior Center Chairlift - Contact has been established with Garaventa. The project is awaiting approval from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). An installation date will be set once approval is received.

Safety Training - Public Works completed a safety training session last Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., hosted by the JIF. Topics included hazardous materials, hazard communication, personal protective equipment, bloodborne pathogens, and lockout/tagout.

Sewer Repair, 223 Edgewood, - The sewer repair at 223 Edgewood was completed on August 24. Appreciation was extended to Oaklyn DPW and the Camden County Public Works Road Crew for providing equipment. The work went fairly smoothly, with a couple of minor issues.

Leaf Collection - Preparation for leaf collection is scheduled to begin October 19, subject to change. Updates will be provided as the date approaches.

Litter Receptacles - Public Works purchased four new receptacles using Clean Communities grant funds, replacing older cans. They have been placed at Speedy Mart, Antonino's, the fire company, and the apartment complex on Merchant Street.

PSE&G Gas Main Project - A meeting with PSE&G is planned for Wednesday, September 9, regarding the gas main project on the Cuthbert-to-Merchant Street section. Engineer Craig Reilly and the reporting official have walked the area and developed a plan, and will brief the Board following the meeting in light of PSE&G's most recent email.

Chief Financial Officer – Excused – Report Submitted

Per Borough Administrator,

- Fire Truck - The Administrator and a CFO are working together on follow-up items related to the fire truck. They will coordinate with the Fire Chief and the Solicitor's office as the specifics are finalized.

Tax Collector - Report Submitted - Tax bills have been mailed, and revenue is beginning to come in. Not all residents have received their bills yet, but bills are available online, where residents can view their balances. The grace period for payment ends **September 25**.

Tax Assessor – Report submitted. In full swing doing the added inspections. They're due at the end of the month, due October 1. So. We'll tie that up at the end of the month.

Police Department - Report submitted

Captain Gaspari presented report on behalf of Chief Bauer.

K-9 Program - Patrolman Primavera will receive the Department's new canine on September 3. Patrolman Primavera will begin the K-9 Academy with on September 14. Because the dog will not yet be trained, the Department may defer a public introduction until the academy graduation in January, rather than presenting the canine at National Night Out. This is still to be determined following further discussion with the Chief.

National Night Out

National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Lieutenant Gorman, Sergeant Tokelish, Officer Knecht and Officer Ferrara were recognized for their work in organizing the event.

Fire Department – Report Submitted

Battalion Chief Devoe spoke on behalf of the Fire Chief.

Call Volume - The company responded to approximately 38 calls for service in August. Year-to-date call volume stands at approximately 383 to 384, reflecting an upward trend.

Operations and Training - Members continue to respond to calls, deploy apparatus, and participate in ongoing training. The company has received updated equipment. Recent training has been conducted at the Audubon Towers, focusing on the standpipe system and the deployment of hose lines, in preparation for any emergency at that location.

Communications Software - In response to a question from the Board, Eric confirmed that the communication software has been ordered and is ready for use. No further action is required of the Borough other than payment of the invoice. The vendor has agreed to date the billing in accordance with a prior conversation. The system is operational, and members are currently being onboarded.

OEM - Emergency Management – Report Submitted

Generator Project, Recreation Center - Deputy Fisher has assumed responsibility for the generator project at the recreation center. He has met with a couple of electrical contractors, and the Borough is awaiting pricing. The reporting official expressed hope that the project can be completed before Election Day. The primary obstacle has been getting contractors to the site to provide quotes. One contractor was confirmed to be attending; the other two were less certain. An electrician has since contacted the Borough to confirm whether the site visit had occurred, and that inquiry will be forwarded to Deputy Fisher. The YMCA completed its work at the facility last Friday, so contractors may return to the site if needed.

Emergency Notification Resolution (2-1-1)

Kurt discussed the resolution to be adopted for the emergency alert system, including 2-1-1. The resolution was not ready for this evening's meeting, and the target for adoption is September 15. Kurt will circulate the draft with suggested changes to the Board for review and feedback.

- Drafts of Code Blue/Red policies were circulated for feedback; a caller was misdirected to Audubon due to location confusion (a hotel on Black Horse Pike not located in Audubon).
- Coordination with the county and "2-1-1" leadership is planned to clarify the referral process.
- The EOP audit returned comments; departmental follow-up is forthcoming.

EMS – Report Submitted

Chief Conti presented call totals by municipality for the previous month:

- Audubon: 138
- Mount Ephraim: 57
- Oaklyn: 34
- Bellmawr: 4
- Gloucester City: 3
- Other mutual aid assignments: 7

Municipal Court – Report Submitted – Operations are smooth; Chelsea continues maternity leave with part-time coverage in place.

Construction Code/Zoning – Report submitted

Office Operations

The construction office is operating smoothly. N. Bicking, TA, thanked the Board for hiring a

second full-time staff member, noting that she has been highly efficient and that residents are receiving excellent service.

Activity Levels

Activity in August was slightly lower than in July, consistent with the usual summer vacation slowdown. Activity is now increasing as residents seek to complete projects before the holidays, which is part of the office's regular annual cycle.

Community Development Office

Work is continuing to establish the Community Development Office, with further updates to be provided as the year progresses. Consolidating zoning and the related departments is working well in these initial stages.

Engineer – Report submitted

Playground Equipment

The playground equipment ordered with grant funds (identified as the LRIG grant) is expected to be delivered and installed the week of September 14. The equipment is believed to be at the contractor's yard already, and that week is the earliest the contractor can schedule the work. Installation is therefore expected to occur after September 15.

DOT Road Project

The next phase of the DOT-funded road project covers Phase 3 of Hampshire and Phase 1 of South Davis. The Borough received PS&E (plans, specifications, and estimate) review approval from the DOT and has advertised the project for bid. The following schedule was outlined:

- Advertisement: out by the end of this week
- Bid opening: by the end of September
- Contract award: early October, contingent upon favorable bids

Solicitor – Nothing to report. Nothing for closed session.

Library – No report submitted/Absent. Per Mayor Jakubowski,

Overdue Materials

Since the Library waived late fees several years ago, patrons have been less likely to return borrowed books. Residents who have materials checked out were asked to return them promptly.

Interlibrary Loan Program

The Library participates in an interlibrary loan program with other libraries. Patrons are not returning those borrowed items, and as a result, other libraries are restricting or ending lending to the Library. Residents were reminded that failure to return materials affects other patrons' ability to borrow books, both locally and at partner libraries.

Rec Center – Report Submitted

August Activity

The Recreation Center hosted four private parties in August. The YMCA concluded its program on August 28. Hockey was held once weekly and will expand to two nights per week beginning in September, reflecting the program's success. Mike Warren was recognized for his work in managing the program.

September Schedule

- Three private parties are scheduled.
- National Night Out will be held at the Recreation Center on September 15.
- The Audubon High School Centennial Celebration will take place on Saturday, September 26.

Sustainable Audubon – Report Submitted. The Sustainable Audubon representative was not present. A written report had been submitted, and the Administrator relayed the highlights.

Mum Sale

The deadline to order is today. Residents wishing to order may email sustainableaudubon@gmail.com and arrange payment by Venmo.

Next Meeting

Sustainable Audubon will meet tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m. at the Senior Center. Meetings are always the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm at the Audubon Senior Center.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Commissioner Wendell:

Acknowledgment of Public Works

The Commissioner thanked the Department of Public Works for its work this summer, noting that it has not been an easy season. Special thanks were extended for addressing the issues on Edgewood Avenue while the homeowners' insurance matters remain unresolved, and for preparing the streets and public spaces for the return of students to school on Thursday.

County Recreation Grant

The Borough has received a \$25,000 grant through Camden County's Round 26 Recreation Facility Enhancements Funding. The Borough is awaiting several shared services agreements and project lists from the County, and further details will be shared once finalized. The grant is expected to support the Green Acres grant previously awarded to the Borough and may also support the Recreation for Individuals with Disabilities grant application submitted within the past few weeks.

Green Wave Turf:

The Commissioner addressed recent conversations regarding the Green Wave turf, which is

Borough property and a significant community investment. The Borough is responsible for maintaining and protecting it, and those entrusted with access share in that responsibility. This is not intended to ask coaches and volunteers to police Borough facilities, but to ensure responsible adult accountability.

Coaches and volunteers who are entrusted with a key fob to the turf are expected to:

- Confirm that all players have left once their use of the facility ends.
- Clean up the facility.
- Lock the bathrooms and snack stands.
- Lock the gates.

If an individual refuses to leave the turf, volunteers are not expected to place themselves in an uncomfortable situation and should contact the Police Department's non-emergency line for assistance.

These expectations were discussed by the Green Wave turf team earlier this summer, with agreement that they would be shared with coaches and volunteers. New signs were posted within the last week stating that the turf closes at 9:30 p.m., and residents are asked to leave at that time.

Liability Clarification

The Commissioner clarified that the intent is not to threaten volunteers or to suggest that a coach is automatically responsible for another person's actions. The expectation recognizes that access to Borough property carries the responsibility to leave it secure.

Closing Remarks

The Commissioner expressed appreciation for the coaches and volunteers who serve Audubon's youth and athletes, and stated that supporting volunteers and expecting adults to act as responsible stewards of Borough property go hand in hand. The Borough, the Police Department, community organizations, coaches, volunteers, families, and residents all share a role in caring for the Borough's facilities.

Commissioner Alemi: Tax bills were mailed out on August 26. They are showing up in mailboxes, and the payments are coming in. The grace period was extended to September 25, 2026. Thank you to all the borough employees for working through this process and its challenges.

At this time the meeting was disrupted by unidentified individuals ("Zoombombing") who spammed the chat with offensive messages and interrupted speakers. The public session was cut short due to persistent disruptions and inappropriate content.

Mayor Jakubowski: Our next meeting is September 14 and the National Night Out is September 15, 2026.

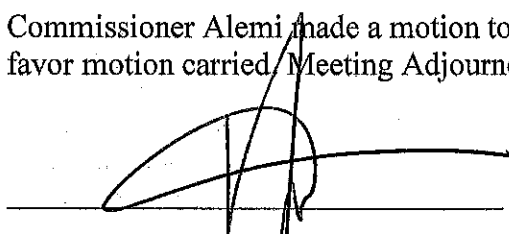
PUBLIC COMMENT: The foregoing motion was made by Commissioner Wendell to open the meeting to the public and Seconded by Commissioner Alemi. All in favor motion carried.

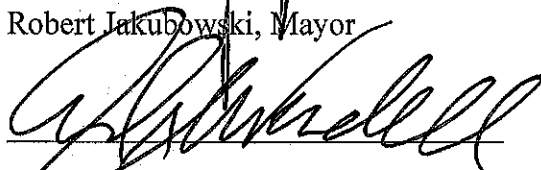
The meeting was open to the public. The public was let in one by one and when asked if they had anything to say, there was not response and then the computer was "Zoombombed" again with inappropriate videos.

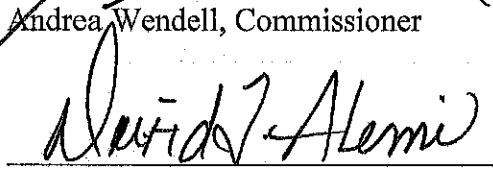
The foregoing motion was made to close the open session by Commissioner Wendell and seconded by Commissioner Alemi. All in favor motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION: N/A

Commissioner Alemi made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Wendell. All in favor motion carried. Meeting Adjourned at 5:37 pm.

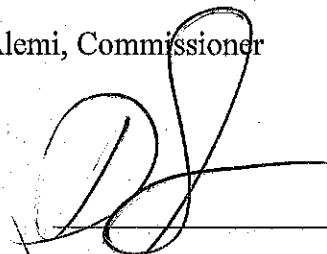


Robert Jakubowski, Mayor

Andrea Wendell, Commissioner

David F. Alemi, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Danielle Ingves, Municipal Clerk

Date:

10/6/2020