TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
GLOUCESTER COUNTY
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 8, 2026
6:00 P.M.

Council Vice President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. in the council room located at 523 Egg Harbor Road, Sewell, New Jersey. Mr. Brown delivered the Sunshine Notice and safety awareness notices.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Council Vice President Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL
Township Clerk Ms. Ciallella took roll call. Councilmembers Mr. Brown, Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone was present via phone and Mr. Yerkes were present. Mr. Del Borrello, III was present via phone. Mayor DellaPia, Business Administrator Mr. Russo and Solicitor Mr. Rooney were present.

APPROVAL OF THE BILL LIST
Council Vice President Brown asked for a motion to approve the April 8, 2026 Bill List. Mr. Harris motioned. Mr. Yerkes seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone, Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Brown. Mr. Del Borrello voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
Council Vice President Brown asked for a motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for March 25, 2026. Mr. Harris motioned. Mr. Yerkes seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone, Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Brown, Mr. Del Borrello voted in favor.

ORDINANCES
O011-2026 AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE SALARIES OF CERTAIN OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON
Mr. Brown asked for a motion to open to the public Ordinance O011-2026. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. All was in favor. No one wished to speak.
Mr. Brown asked for a motion to close to the public Ordinance O011-2026. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. All was in favor. Mr. Brown asked for a motion to adopt Ordinance O011-2026. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Harris, Mr. Brown, Ms. Pasqualone and Mr. Del Borrello voted yes.

O012-2026 ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY AMENDING CHAPTER 285 (ZONING), ARTICLE XLV, SECTION 285-342, ENTITLES "CLASSES OF LICENSES CONDITIONALLY PERMITTED WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP, MAXIMUM LICENSES PERMITTED
Mr. Brown asked for motion to introduce O012-2026. Mr. Harris motioned. Mr. Yerkes seconded. Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone, Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Del Borrello, Mr. Brown voted yes. Public Hearing and adoption will occur on April 22, 2026.

2026 BUDGET

Mayor DellaPia delivered the 2026 Budget Address

Good evening, Members of Council and residents of Washington Township. What a privilege it is to stand before this community tonight. Washington Township is a place filled with dedicated residents, hardworking families, and a shared commitment to making this an even better place to live — and it is because of that shared commitment that I am proud to present our fiscal year 2026 municipal budget.

This is my 2nd municipal budget as your mayor. Budget season is a continuous process — 365 days a year. We are always looking at what is being spent, where it is being spent, and why it is being spent. I want to extend my thanks and gratitude to my Business Administrator Joe Russo, our CFO Colette Bachich, Assistant CFO James Walker, and the rest of our finance department. All of your hard work, input, and guidance have helped us present this budget early in the year again. Our goal was to put together a budget in a timely manner that takes into consideration the needs of the residents and the financial stability of the Township for this year and for many years to come.

I am proud of what my administration has accomplished in it's first year, and I am excited for what the future will bring to our town. I would like to take a few minutes to talk about the improvements that we have made or are in the process of completing:

· Construction will soon be underway for our Inclusive Playground at Washington Lake Park. This is a million dollar plus project that is being fully funded by grants. It utilizes no taxpayer funds from the Municipal Budget. This all-inclusive playground is an intentionally designed space that allows children of all abilities—physical, cognitive, sensory, and social—to play together, fostering a sense of belonging and community. This is an exciting addition to Washington Lake Park that we are confident will be enjoyed by residents for years to come.

· We are in the final stages of completing an updated, user-friendly website, so all residents can access information easily and quickly. We are hopeful that the fresh, streamlined look of our website will simplify your online experience, and allow us to disseminate news and information to all of our residents more efficiently. The new site should be live by end of the summer 2026.

· We are instituting the process for our municipality to receive payments in the form of debit and credit cards. These forms of payments have never been accepted prior to 2025. This system is already operational in our tax office, and will very soon be available in our clerk's office as well. It is our goal to have this ability in every department by year's end.

· We have implemented a system for automatic ACH tax payments, allowing residents to schedule their tax payments directly from a checking or savings account, avoiding potential late fees.

· Additionally, we are in the process of setting up a new program called SDL Portal. The SDL Portal is a cloud-based municipal management application that provides residents, contractors, and officials with 24/7 online access to property data, construction permits, and inspection

scheduling. It serves as a digital hub for tracking building applications, zoning, and property information. This system will benefit residents and contractors alike, creating quicker turnaround times. This program should be up and running by the end of 2026.

· Last but not least, we have entered into a joint service agreement for our Court Services with the Borough of Pitman. With Washington Township as the lead agency, this arrangement will bring an additional revenue stream to our Township. We are optimistic that this partnership could lead to additional shared services and arrangements with other Gloucester County communities. This agreement will be starting in the 4th quarter of 2026.

I must admit that this year's budget has been a difficult one to work on, but please rest assured that we have done everything within our control to keep spending to a minimum. These unforeseen factors have contributed to the introduction of a budget with a municipal portion tax increase of 6.4 cents. For reference, one "penny" for our Township is equal to just over $470,000.

Many of you are probably wondering what does 6.4 cents mean for me? How much is this going to cost me? The average assessed home value in Washington Township is $233,346. Please be aware that this is not the market value, only what a home is assessed at for tax purposes. A home with an average assessed value, pays $9,428.81 a year in property taxes. The proposed municipal tax increase for 2026 will raise your municipal portion $12.50 a month — about the cost of one cup of coffee per week.

There are many components that directly affect this budget. Here is the breakdown of the factors contributing to the proposed increase:

Health Care and Other Insurance Costs

Health Care – In 2024, As a preemptive cost saving measure, Washington Township left the failing NJ State Benefits Plan and joined the Southern New Jersey Regional Employee Benefits Health Insurance Fund in order to maintain more control over ever increasing health insurance costs. The Township immediately benefitted from this move, with only a minor increase for 2025. Unfortunately, due largely to rising, industry wide prescription expenses, healthcare costs have seen double digit percentage increases in 2026, resulting in a $300,000 increase to our 2026 premiums, which cover employees and retirees. However, this was the last year of our HIF review period. As a result, starting in 2027 and beyond, any healthcare increases should remain capped.

Liability Insurance – This premium increased $225,000 for the 2026 year.

Workman's Compensation Insurance – This saw an increase of $168,000 for 2026.

Total increase from these 3 insurance premiums is $693,000 (which is 1.47 cents of that 6.4 cent increase).

Utility Costs – Just like in your own households, the municipality has faced the unprecedented increases to our utilities. We have seen the following impact to our 2026 budget:

· Electric costs rose $100,000 from last year

· Street Lighting costs rose $100,000 from last year

· Heating and Gas Service Costs have increased $5,000 from last year

The Total increase of utility related expenditures is $205,000 over last year (which is .44 cents of that 6.4 cent increase).

Trash Collection Contract – Last year only contained a portion of the new trash contract costs, as it did not take effect until August of 2025. 2026 will incur a full year of premiums for trash collection, recycling collection, yard debris collection, and bulk trash. The value of these increases , including the cost of bulk trash is $755,000.00 (which is 1.60 cents of that 6.4 cent increase).

Snow Storms – 2026 has already hit us hard on the weather front, with the area experiencing 2 major snow and ice storms. These 2 unprecedented storms cost the municipality $564,000.00 including the cost of labor, sub-contractors, and snow clearing equipment & supplies (which is 1.20 cents of that 6.4 cent increase).

Payroll – Once every 11 years, there are 27 payrolls on the calendar in a fiscal year compared to the usual 26, and you guessed it, it happens this year. Payroll expenses were reduced by over $284,000 in the 2025 budget. Even with our best efforts to maintain payroll levels, we have to account for an additional $225,000 for 2026 due to this unique occurrence (which is .50 cents of the 6.4 cent increase).

Union Contracts

The Township currently operates with six separate collective bargaining units:

· 3 Police PBA Unions (Rank & File, Sergeants, and Lieutenants & Captains)

· AFSCME Public Works Laborers

· AFSCME Public Works Supervisors

· AFSCME Clerical Union

A successful negotiation of new contracts for both the AFSCME Clerical Union and the AFSCME Public Works Laborers occurred in early 2026.

Breakdown of Increase:

· Insurance: 1.47 cents ($693,000)

· Trash: 1.60 cents ($755,000)

· Utility Costs: .44 cents ($205,000)

· Snow Storms: 1.20 cents ($564,000)

· Extra Pay Period: .50 cents ($225,000)

These 5 factors on their own account for 5.21 cents of the proposed 6.4 cent increase. The remaining 1.19 cents is being used for the overall infrastructure of our Township.

Your property taxes are broken down across multiple entities and is dispersed in the following way:

· School District – 56.20%

· County – 17.45%

· Fire Department – 5.10%

· Municipality – 19.62%

Simply put, the Township receives (less than) one out of every five dollars of property tax paid. All of which goes towards providing services to residents.

Lastly and most importantly, I am proud to announce the planning and construction of a new Police Department Headquarters. Having served the town over the last 6 years and seeing firsthand the deterioration of that facility, I can confidently say that this is a need, not a want. Our Police Chief, Patrick Gursick, has shown us that the jail cells are out of compliance, the entire plumbing system is failing (causing one of the bathrooms to be completely shut down), there is a non-operational backup generator, a failing roof, and a multitude of other structural problems. This is not just about brick and mortar; it is about ensuring our police officers have the resources and environment they need to protect you and your families effectively and professionally. The almost 60-year-old building was originally built in 1967, at a time when the department consisted of 9 officers, serving less than 15,000 residents. Our current department consists of almost 100 officers that serve a growing community of over 50,000 residents. We as a Township need to be proactive, not reactive. The current facility is barely enough space for the staff we currently have. Our Township is growing and our police force is going to need to grow along with it.

Closing

What does it mean to be Financially Responsible? It means managing money to live within your means while planning for the future — budgeting, saving, and avoiding unnecessary debt. It involves consistently making productive, informed decisions — like building an emergency fund, investing, and paying bills on time — all to safeguard long-term stability and security. That is exactly what we are doing for Washington Township.

I will always be transparent with you, the residents and taxpayers. We are living in a time where the rising costs of goods, utilities, food, and so much more are putting real strain on families and individuals across this country. The Township is not immune to these rising costs. But I want to ensure you that every decision in this budget has been made with our resident's best interests at heart.

Budgeting is not just about spending money. It is about spending the right amount of money on the right things. It is taking care of the needs, not chasing the wants. Myself and my administration will continue to work hard monitoring all spending within the Township. We will continue to work with other government agencies and officials and pursue new initiatives and grants for our community. My goal as mayor is to continue to move our Township forward and to regain Washington Township's financial stability while continuing to sustain the services that Washington Township residents and taxpayers have come to know and deserve.

I would like to thank all of the volunteers, boards, and commissions who help our Township all throughout the year, especially Mother's Cupboard, for all their efforts day in and day out, in this ever-changing economy. I would like to thank our dedicated Washington Township employees for their efforts serving our community throughout the year. You are appreciated for all the work you do. Thank you to all my department heads for working alongside me this past year and managing your department's budget. Your efforts were integral in keeping this budget where it is. Thank you to Township Council for working together in the best interest of the Township. I appreciate your collaborative efforts. I want to again, personally thank my administration and finance team for all of your efforts.

Finally, I would like to end by saying thank you to all Washington Township residents for putting your trust and faith in me to lead our Township into the future. Thank you for your continued support as we continue to work extremely hard every day to make Washington Township a better place for all to live, work, and raise a family. Despite these difficult choices, we're not just reacting to the current economic challenges; we are planning for a sustainable, thriving future for Washington Township. Together, we will continue to ensure our Township remains a place where families and businesses flourish. I know that these challenges are not easy, but I'm confident that with your continued support, we will navigate these difficult times and emerge stronger. We're not just managing today's budget; we're building for a stronger tomorrow. Thank you for your trust, your patience, and your continued partnership in making Washington Township a place we can all be proud of.

Thank you for your time tonight and have a good night!

R098-2026 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE INTRODUCED 2026 MUNICIPAL BUDGET BE READ BY TITLE ONLY

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to approve Resolution R098-2026. Mr. Harris motioned. Mr. Yerkes seconded the motion. Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone and Mr. Brown, Mr. Del Borrello voted in favor.

R099-2026 RESOLUTION TO INTRODUCE THE 2026 TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to introduce Resolution R099-2026. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Harris, Mr. Bennett and Mr. Brown, Mr. Del Borrello was in favor.

R100-2026 RESOLUTION FOR SELF EXAMINATION OF 2026 BUDGET

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to introduce Resolution R100-2026. Mr. Yerkest motioned. Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Harris, Mr. Bennett and Mr. Brown voted yes. Mr. Del Borrello was absent.

RESOLUTIONS

The following Resolutions were part of the consent agenda and only required a vote for all listed. Township Clerk Ciallella read each one by title.

R101-2026 RESOLUTION APPROVING LARGE GATHERING APPLICATION FOR SAINT PETER AND PAUL CHURCH

R102-2026 RESOLUTION CANCELLING TAXES FOR AMANDA J. EDMA TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN, BLOCK 84.01, LOT 19, 139 ROLLING ACRE DR. EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 27, 2026

R103-2026 RESOLUTION CANCELLING FOR WILLIAM H. TAPPIN JR. TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN, BLOCK 19.09, LOT 5, 263 CHAMPION WAY EFFECTIVE FEBRIARY 10, 2026

R104-2026 RESOLUTION CANCELLING TAXES FOR ZAKARIA AHMAD REHAWI TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN, BLOCK 192.02, LOT 13, 17 GREENWOOD DRIVE EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 10, 2026

R105-2026 RESOLUTION CANCELLING TAXES FOR JANICE MAROTTA A WIDOW OF A TOTALLY DISABLED VETERAN, BLOCK 85.04, LOT 6 20 MANCHESTER RD. EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 9, 2026

R106-2026 RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A SAFETY AND STABILIZATION BOND AND INSPECTION ESCROW FROM HOLMAN AUTOMOTIVE GROUP INC., 3641 ROUTE 42, TURNERSVILLE, NJ 08012 BLOCK 115, LOT 22 PROJECT WATPX26025

R107-2026 RESOLUTION CONSENTING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF MAURY K. CUTLER, ESQUIRE AS CONFLICT PUBLIC DEFENDER AN AUTHORIZING THE PROPER OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS RESOLUTION R101-2026 THROUGH R107-2026

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to approve Resolution R101-2026 through R107-2026. Mr. Harris motioned. Mr. Yerkes seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone, Mr. Yerkes, Mr. Brown and Mr. Del Borrello all voted yes.

OLD BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS / REPORTS

- **Mr. Harris** –The Olde Stone House is holding their 18th Classic Car Show on April 25 from 10 am to 2 pm.
- **Ms. Pasqualone-** thanked the finance department for all their hard work on the budget.
- **Mr. Yerkes** – Sunday is Palm Sunday and commented that Heritage Valley Easter Egg Hunt.
- **Mr. Del Borrello** – Condolences to Sal's family, he will be greatly missed. Condolences to the Ferris family. Congratulation to Sergeant Nelson for being in the SJ Magazine. Thanked the mayor and the Finance team for all their hard work on the budget.
- **Mr. Rooney**-had nothing to report
- **Mr. Russo**-had nothing to report
- **Gianna Caveng HS Liaison-** gave an update on all upcoming high school events.
- **Mayor DellaPia** – Congratulated Gianna Caveng on getting her driver's license. Condolences send to our 103 year old resident Sal who passed away.

▪***Mr. Brown*** *– ALL DOGS* 🐶 *IN THE TOWNSHIP ARE REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED* AND VACCINATED. PLEASE STOP IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE TO REGISTER YOUR DOG FOR 2026.

▪ PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION ON EARTH DAY 🌎 ACTIVITIES! THIS INCLUDES BIRD WALKS AND EXHIBITS, POETRY WALKS, RECYCLING LESSONS, MILKWEED, MARIGOLD AND TREE SEEDLING GIVEAWAYS!

▪ THE ANNUAL RED CROSS ⛑ BATTLE OF THE BADGES BLOOD DRIVE IS ON TUESDAY, APRIL 28 FROM 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING. PLEASE. PLEASE CALL 1-800-REDCROSS TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT.

▪ WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPER SATURDAY EVENT IS ON SATURDAY MAY 9 IN WASHINGTON LAKE PARK FROM 10 AM TO 4 PM.

▪ THE PRIMARY ELECTION IS TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 6 AM TO 8 PM ☑ YOU MAY ONLY VOTE THE PARTY YOU ARE REGISTERED TO DURING THE PRIMARY. THE DEADLINE TO CHANGE YOUR PARTY AFFILIATION IS APRIL 8. THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE IS MAY 12. FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE. 📝

▪ WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP SHRED EVENT WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2026 AT THE WASHING TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING 523 EGG HARBOR RD, FROM 9 A.M. TO 12 PM. MUST BE A WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP RESIDENT TO PARTICIPATE.

▪ MARGARET E. HEGGAN ON APRIL 18TH AT 3PM IS JAY DANIELS CONCERT-A YEAR IN REVIEW

▪ NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK RAFFLE FOR TWO TICKETS TO 1776: THE MUSICAL, THE WINNER WILL BE CHOSEN ON MAY 1, 2026

▪ Please be sure to lock your car doors. 🚗 👮 ♂ every night and take your key/fob inside your house with you. If you suspect suspicious activity, please contact the police. Please visit our website, https://www.twp.washington.nj.us/ for information and updates regarding the trash.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded. All was in favor.

Mark Everly-60 Wendy Way- Asked to please stop billing people with service dogs, he feels that it is a lot for a disabled veteran to pay. There was a discussion between Mr. Everly and council on ways to rectify the situation. Mayor DellaPia commented that the new software system may help. He asked about E-bikes and if they are permitted in WTLP. Mr. Rooney commented that it is a state law, however, he will look into this.

Anthony DiNatale- 10 Packer Court. He is the principal, the applicant for a future cannabis location on the black Horse Pike of "We are Stronger Together LLC" the applicant for a hopeful future cannabis project located on the Black Horse Pike. He came before council tonight as 100% percent disabled veteran under NJ Law for priority processing and to ensure that the township's commitment to that priority is upheld throughout this process. I would like to formally submit this binder of primary source documents and public records and request that these materials be placed in my official project file and included as part of the permanent administrative record for my application. Mr. DiNatale comments that he has sent digital copies to Mr. Rooney in conjunction with the local Finance Board, conduct a full investigation into these documents that have been provided. Mr. DiNatale presented to the binder to the Township Clerk in which the Binder was accepted. Mr. DiNatale thanked everyone for their time.

Becky Bates-Sewell resident. Had a question regarding the Flock Cameras that are used within the township. How many in total and how many are up and running? I asking if any camera's that face playgrounds where children are within our community could be moved? Feels this may be a violation of there rights and safety.

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to close the meeting to the public. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded, All was in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council Vice President Brown stated Council will be going into Executive Session regarding Litigation regarding Martino Cartier which will last about 30 minutes and asked for a Motion to approve **R108-2026 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION**. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Mr. Harris seconded. Mr. Brown, Mr. Harris, Ms. Pasqualone Mr. Yerkes and Mr. Del Borrello voted yes.Executive Session was entered at 6:55 PM.

Mr. Brown asked for a motion to exit Executive Session at 7:44 PM. Ms. Pasqualone motioned. Mr., Yerkes. Mr. Brown, Mr. Harris, Mrs. Pasqualone, Mr. Yerkes and Mr. Del Borrello voted yes.

ADJOURNMENT

The next Council meeting is on April 22, 2026 at 6:00 PM. Mr. Brown asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Yerkes motioned. Ms. Pasqualone seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Ciallella, RMC/CMR
Township Clerk

Donald C. Brown, Jr.
Council Vice President