

REGULAR MEETING
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COUNCIL MEETING ROOM – UPPER LEVEL

April 21, 2026

The following are the Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council that was held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was opened with the Inspiration and Pledge of Allegiance, led by the Municipal Clerk.

At the commencement of the meeting Mayor Bobbitt read the following statement of proper notice:

STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE: "Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Council being held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, has been provided through the posting of the annual meeting schedule of said Council in accordance with Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act." Said Notice was forwarded to The Trentonian, The Times and The Princeton Packet on December 12, 2025.

The roll was then called as follows:

Present: Councilmembers Farmer, Giglio, Kownacki, Santos and Mayor Bobbitt.
Absent: None.

Also in attendance were Kevin Nerwinski, Esq., Municipal Manager, Arthur Sypek, Esq., Municipal Attorney.

Special Proclamations, Recognitions and Presentations

Mr. Gary R. Backinoff, Esq., began a presentation regarding Lawrence Non-Profit Housing, Inc.'s (LNPH) Strategic Plan for 2026 through 2029. He thanked Council for allowing this presentation to be placed on tonight's agenda. Mr. Backinoff shared that LNPH has done a tremendous job over the last fifty years of providing affordable housing to the moderate and low-income families of Lawrence Township. He noted that LNPH recently made three-and-a-half million dollars' worth of improvements to Eggerts Crossing Village, and have implemented many tenant-focused services and programs.

Mr. Bakinoff, Esq. then called Board President of Lawrence Nonprofit Housing, Inc. (LPNH), Ms. Mirika Martin, to the podium to present the Strategic Plan for 2026 through 2029. Ms. Martin stated that LNPH has more than fifty years of service dedicated to

advocating for affordable housing in Lawrence Township. She explained that LNPH serves as the sole partner to Eggerts Crossing Village, which is a 100-unit, affordable housing community that has provided stability and opportunity for generations of residents. Ms. Martin indicated that LPNH has recently launched a strategic planning process to identify the best way to reinvest in the community, while maintaining their mission to help people thrive and build healthy, resilient, inclusive, safe, affordable and caring communities. Finally, Ms. Martin then shared the four strategic goals set forth by LNPH, which are: 1) Maintain Eggert's Crossing Village as a safe, stable and thriving community, 2) Expand resident access to services that support well-being, financial security, and opportunity, 3) Champion greater opportunities for Lawrence residents living in affordable housing, 4) Strengthen LNPH's organizational capacity to expand its community impact.

Mayor Christopher Bobbitt and Councilwoman Patricia Farmer both thanked Ms. Martin for her presentation on behalf of Lawrence Non-Profit Housing, Inc.

Mr. Fred Vereen, Jr., made a statement on behalf of the founders of Lawrence Non-Profit Housing, Inc. (LNPH). He relayed that there were twenty-seven members from all areas of Lawrence Township who began this venture in 1975, united by their common mission to satisfy a social need by providing low to moderate income housing to families living in substandard housing. He proclaimed that tonight is a witness to the world that their dreams, aspirations, hard work and dedication were not in vain. Mr. Vereen stated that LNPH has demonstrated the productive role that affordable housing can play in helping people thrive within a healthy, resilient, inclusive and caring community. In addition, he explained that LNPH has also demonstrated the valuable role the community can play in developing the Lawrence Community Center into a facility that effectively meets the needs of Lawrence Township residents.

Public Participation

Mayor Bobbitt read into record the following statement:

The focus of the Public Comment Period is for members of the public to inform the Governing Body of their views. This time is an opportunity for Township Council to listen with care to the public and to consider what we hear in our deliberations. It is not a time for back-and-forth dialogue, as that can be difficult for us to give accurate responses to critical and complex issues on the spot. Rather, one can call or email members of Council, Manager or Clerk for additional information or response to an issue.

Mayor Bobbitt also read two excerpts from the Lawrence Township Administrative Code regarding the manner in addressing Council:

A person may address the Council upon recognition by the Chair. The person addressing Council shall write down their name and address on the sign-up sheet, step

up to the microphone and give their name in an audible tone of voice, for the record, and shall have the right to address the Council for the amount of time designated by the Chair. No person having the floor shall be permitted to enter into discussion, either directly, or through a member of Council, without permission of the Chair. No question shall be asked of Councilperson except through the Chair. Also, decorum at Council meetings: any person making any impertinent or slanderous remarks or who shall become boisterous while addressing Council shall forthwith be barred from further audience before Council by the presiding officer unless permission to continue or again address the Council is granted by the majority vote of Council.

Mr. Christopher Woolley stated that he is present tonight on behalf of *Every Child Valued* to invite everyone to attend an award presentation that will take place on May 13, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lawrence High School. He explained that Dr. Lerone A. Martin, director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, will be presenting a talk entitled, "Before the Dream: The Untold Story of Young Martin Luther King, Jr." Following the presentation, Mr. Woolley shared that Every Child Valued will present Mr. Fred Vereen, Jr., with the Martin Luther King, Jr. award for service to his community.

Dr. Robyn Klim, Superintendent of Schools for Lawrence Township, thanked Council for the opportunity to speak this evening, and stated that she is a committed partner in the continued growth and strength of Lawrence Township. As affordable housing expands in Lawrence Township, Dr. Klim professed a recognition of both the responsibility and opportunity that comes with that growth. She revealed that public education sits at the center of this work, with a clear role to ensure that every child who enters school is met with access, opportunity, and a pathway to success. Dr. Klim believes deeply that all students can achieve at high levels with the right support, made possible through the partnership with Council, the community members, and the organizations represented this evening.

Councilwoman Bonnie Giglio thanked Dr. Klim for being present tonight and for her partnership.

Ms. Barbara Hairston stated that she has been a resident of Lawrence Township since 2021, and attends the Lawrence Township Senior Center on a regular basis. She asked what the future holds for the Senior Center with regard to the retirement of former Executive Director, Lillian LaSalle. Ms. Hairston asked if someone in authority could speak with the Seniors and explain the changes that will be made.

Councilman Jim Kownacki stated that he is the liaison to the Senior Center and relayed that at the last Board of Directors meeting, Ms. Nancy Bergen, Superintendent of Recreation, explained the improvements that will be made and changes that will take place at the Center. Mr. Kownacki relayed that he will discuss this with Ms. Bergen, and suggested that they may come speak to the seniors at lunchtime, as this is when the Center draws its largest crowd.

Further discussion was had with regard to scheduling a time for the presentation, allowing for enough notice to the residents, and providing copies of Mr. Nerwinski's explanation that was read into record at the April 7th Council meeting with regard to the Recreation Department relocation and operational restructuring.

Ms. Victoria McCann introduced herself and stated that she is here representing the nonprofit organization, *Mercer Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction*. She indicated that they have been active for forty-eight years, and provide high-quality, substance abuse prevention and early intervention programs, services, and support to the Community. Ms. McCann's current goal, as a part of the *Community Prevention Coalition Team* within Mercer Council, is to focus on tobacco merchant education with the end goal to eliminate both flavored vaping products and sales to minors. She is advocating for stronger local action by establishing Township-level licensing with higher fees, stricter enforcement, and higher fines to better hold retailers accountable and reduce the availability of illegal products to minors.

Review and Revisions of Agenda

There was no review and revision of agenda.

Adoption of Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Santos, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 17, 2026 were approved without corrections on the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Ms. Farmer	X						
Ms. Giglio	X						
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Ms. Santos	X					X	
Mayor Bobbitt	X						

Awarding or Rejecting of Bids

On a motion by Ms. Santos, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, Resolution (9-A) Authorizing Award of Bid to Master Build & Design for Rehabilitation at 11 Scherer Court.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this a part of Lawrence Township's affordable housing rehabilitation program, which authorizes an award to Master Build & Design for \$5,920.00.

Resolution No. 161-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, bids were received and publicly opened for the project known as the Lawrence Township Home Improvement Program for 11 Scherer Court, Lawrence Township, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, two (2) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was Master Build and Design that submitted a bid in the amount of \$5,920.00 to perform the tasks required in the rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:50-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the account to be charged is:

Acct.	Ord. No.	Name	Amount
6-19-56-853-299	-----	Affordable Housing Trust Fund	\$5,920.00

and;

WHEREAS, Master Build and Design has performed satisfactorily;

WHEREAS, Youssef Chacha, owner of 11 Scherer Court, has been deemed eligible to participate in the rehabilitation program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that pursuant to the recommendations of the Municipal Manager, the Mayor and the Municipal Clerk hereby authorize the acceptance of the bid and the execution of a contract with Master Build and Design, 400 Broadway, Ste 104, Long Branch, New Hersey 07740 for the purposes of rehabilitating 11 Scherer Court;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Manager is hereby authorized to draft the necessary agreement, subject to the approval of the Municipal Attorney as to form and content thereof.

Adopted: April 21, 2026

Ayes: Councilmembers Farmer, Giglio, Kownacki, Santos and Mayor Bobbitt.
 Nays: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

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On a motion by Ms. Santos, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, Resolution (9-B) Authorizing Award of Bid to Master Build & Design for Rehabilitation at 120 Slack Avenue.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this is a part of Lawrence Township's affordable housing rehabilitation program, which authorizes an award to Master Build & Design for \$26,500.00.

A woman in the audience, who did not wish to come to the podium and state her name, explained that her mother's house is close to this location, and she wished for more detail as to what is happening to this house. Discussion was had with regard to the fact that the Township was not building another structure at this site, but instead providing for improvements to this property using money from the Township's affordable housing rehabilitation program.

#### Resolution No. 162-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, bids were received and publicly opened for the project known as the Lawrence Township Home Improvement Program for 120 Slack Avenue, Lawrence Township, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, two (2) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was Master Build and Design that submitted a bid in the amount of \$26,500.00 to perform the tasks required in the rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:50-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the account to be charged is:

| Acct.           | Ord. No. | Name                          | Amount      |
|-----------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 6-19-56-853-299 | -----    | Affordable Housing Trust Fund | \$26,500.00 |

and;

WHEREAS, Master Build and Design has performed satisfactorily;

WHEREAS, Stephen Walter, owner of 120 Slack Avenue, has been deemed eligible to participate in the rehabilitation program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that pursuant to the recommendations of the Municipal Manager, the Mayor and the Municipal Clerk hereby authorize the acceptance of the bid and the execution of a contract with Master Build and

Design, 400 Broadway, Ste 104, Long Branch, New Hersey 07740 for the purposes of rehabilitating 120 Slack Avenue;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Manager is hereby authorized to draft the necessary agreement, subject to the approval of the Municipal Attorney as to form and content thereof.

Adopted: April 21, 2026

Ayes: Councilmembers Farmer, Giglio, Kownacki, Santos and Mayor Bobbitt.  
 Nays: None.  
 Absent: None.  
 Abstain: None.

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On a motion by Ms. Santos, seconded by Mr. Kownacki, Resolution (9-C) Authorizing Award of Bid to Unlimited Construction for Rehabilitation at 331 Federal City Boulevard.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this a part of Lawrence Township's affordable housing rehabilitation program, which authorizes an award to Unlimited Construction for Rehabilitation for \$17,700.00.

Resolution No. 163-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, bids were received and publicly opened for the project known as the Lawrence Township Home Improvement Program for 331 Federal Point Blvd., Lawrence Township, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, two (2) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was Unlimited Builders Construction, that submitted a bid in the amount of \$17,700.00 to perform the tasks required in the rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:50-14, a Certificate of Availability of Funds has been provided and the account to be charged is:

Acct.	Ord. No.	Name	Amount
6-19-56-853-299	-----	Affordable Housing Trust Fund	\$17,700.00

and;

WHEREAS, Unlimited Builders Construction has performed satisfactorily;

WHEREAS, Patricia Hatch, owner of 331 Federal Point Blvd., has been deemed eligible to participate in the rehabilitation program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that pursuant to the recommendations of the Municipal Manager, the Mayor and the Municipal Clerk hereby authorize the acceptance of the bid and the execution of a contract with Unlimited Builders Construction, PO Box 9029, Hamilton, New Jersey 08650 for the purposes of rehabilitating 11 Scherer Court;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Municipal Manager is hereby authorized to draft the necessary agreement, subject to the approval of the Municipal Attorney as to form and content thereof.

Adopted: April 21, 2026

Ayes: Councilmembers Farmer, Giglio, Kownacki, Santos and Mayor Bobbitt.
Nays: None.
Absent: None.
Abstain: None.

Introduction of Ordinances

Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2503-26 SALARY ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE – UNCLASSIFIED AND/OR EXEMPT, SEASONAL, EMERGENCY (NON-UNION) EMPLOYEES FOR 2026-2029 – Annual Increase, Deleting Stipend for Fire Department Liaison and Adding Title Assistant Superintendent of Public Works to Grade 12."

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this amendment provides for annual adjustments, deletes the stipend for the Fire Department Liaison (as this position no longer exists) and adds the title Assistant Superintendent of Public Works to Grade 12. This is not a new hire, he explained, but is simply a new position created through bargaining that took place with the labor union.

Mayor Bobbitt asked if there were any questions from Council. Seeing none, he read into record the following email from Mr. Sypek:

Council will allow limited public comment on Ordinances on the agenda for first reading, not to exceed three minutes. Please note that the formal public hearing will occur at the second reading of the Ordinance on May 19, 2026.

Mayor Bobbitt explained that the second reading will allow for a longer comment period; however, judging by the interest in these Ordinances, he felt that some people may wish to share their opinions. He then opened the floor to the public for those who wished to come to the podium to make a statement.

Seeing no public comment, Mayor Bobbitt closed public comment on Ordinance No. 2509-26.

The Ordinance No. 2509-26 was approved on the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Ms. Farmer	X						
Ms. Giglio	X						
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Ms. Santos	X					X	
Mayor Bobbitt	X						

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Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE REPEALING EXISTING ARTICLE IX "AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROCEDURAL AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS" OF THE TOWNSHIP LAND USE ORDINANCE IN ENTIRETY AND REPLACING IT WITH A NEW ARTICLE X "AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROCEDURAL AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS" – Affordable Housing Ordinance".

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this Ordinance updates and replaces the Township's existing affordable housing regulations to comply with current State law and court requirements. It establishes comprehensive rules for how affordable housing is planned, built, marketed and maintained, including requirements for income-eligibility, pricing, long-term affordability controls, and administration, ensuring that affordable housing units remain available to low and moderate income households over time.

Mayor Bobbitt asked if there were any questions from Council. Seeing none, he asked if there were any questions from the public. Seeing none, he closed public comment on Ordinance No. 2510-26.

The Ordinance No. 2510-26 was approved on the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL       | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Ms. Farmer    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Giglio    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mr. Kownacki  | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Ms. Santos    | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mayor Bobbitt | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

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Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE CREATING SECTION 426.1 "NEIGHBORHOOD – 1 OVERLAY DISTRICT" IN ARTICLE IV ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS" OF THE LAND USE ORDINANCE TO PERMIT INCLUSIONARY AND INCLUSINARY MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT – Ordinance Creating the Neighborhood – 1 Overlay District".

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this arises out of a mediation agreement with Fair Share Housing Center NJ that creates a new neighborhood 1 Overlay District for a portion of the former ETS campus to allow for the development of a new mixed-use residential neighborhood. It establishes standards for a variety of housing types, requires a portion of the units to be affordable, and sets the design density and open space requirements to ensure the area is developed as a walkable, interconnected community with access to parks, recreation and supporting neighborhood services.

Mayor Bobbitt asked if there were any questions from Council. Seeing none, he asked if there were any questions from the public. Seeing none, he closed public comment on Ordinance No. 2511-26.

The Ordinance No. 2511-26 was approved on the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Ms. Farmer	X						
Ms. Giglio	X						
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Ms. Santos	X					X	
Mayor Bobbitt	X						

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Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 421, "REGIONAL COMMERCIAL (RC) DISTRICT" OF ARTICLE IV "ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS" OF THE LAND USE ORDINANCE TO PERMIT INCREASED INCLUSIONARY DEVELOPMENT AT THE QUAKER BRIDGE MALL PROPERTY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TOWNSHIP MEDIATION AGREEMENT WITH FAIR SHARE HOUSING CENTER – Ordinance Amending the RC Regional Commercial District".

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this arises out of the mediation agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center. He explained that the Township filed an objection to the Fourth-Round program through the mediation that was overseen by a retired Superior Court judge, and arrived at an agreement that allows an additional one hundred homes as an Overlay on the Quaker Bridge Mall site. Mr. Nerwinski relayed that this Ordinance updates the Township zoning rules for the regional commercial district to allow additional residential development, including affordable housing, at the Quaker Bridge Mall property. He further explained that it establishes standards for mixed-use development that will set limits on density and total number of units, while also requiring a portion of the housing to be affordable in accordance with the Township housing obligations. Mr. Nerwinski noted

that this is not suggesting that this will absolutely happen, but it is simply the Township's inclusion into the program to provide realistic opportunities for housing in certain areas.

Mayor Bobbitt asked if there were any questions from Council. Seeing none, he asked if there were any questions from the public. Seeing none, he closed public comment on Ordinance No. 2512-26.

The Ordinance No. 2512-26 was approved on the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL       | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Ms. Farmer    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Giglio    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mr. Kownacki  | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Ms. Santos    | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mayor Bobbitt | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

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Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 409, "APARTMENT TOWNHOUSE (AT) DISTRICT" OF ARTICLE IV "ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS" OF THE LAND USE ORDINANCE TO PERMIT INCLUSIONARY AND INCLUSIONARY MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT – Ordinance Amending the AT District".

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this arises out of a mediation agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center of NJ, requiring that the Township permit inclusionary development at the property known as 3450 Princeton Pike and the adjacent lot along Lenox Drive. He explained that the Ordinance updates the Township's zoning rules for certain properties within the AT apartment and townhouse district to allow for housing that includes affordable units. Mr. Nerwinski relayed that it also changes the zoning designation for specific sites, including properties along Lenox Drive and at Harney's Corner, by placing a new Overlay district and establishing detailed standards for how these areas can be developed (such as permitted uses, building density and layout requirements).

Mayor Bobbitt asked if there were any questions from Council. Seeing none, he asked if there were any questions from the public. Seeing none, he closed public comment on Ordinance No. 2513-26.

The Ordinance No. 2513-26 was approved on the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL       | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Ms. Farmer    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Giglio    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mr. Kownacki  | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Ms. Santos    | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mayor Bobbitt | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

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Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE REPEALING EXISTING SECTION 901 "AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTRIBUTION" OF ARTICLE IX "FEES, GUARANTEES, INSPECTIONS AND OFF-TRACT IMPROVEMENTS" OF THE TOWNSHIP LAND USE ORDINANCE IN ENTIRETY AND REPLACING IT WITH A NEW SECTION OF 901 "AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTRIBUTION" Affordable Housing Redevelopment Fee Ordinance".

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this arises out of the Township's mediation agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center of NJ, and updates the Township's rules for collecting development fees from residential and non-residential projects to support affordable housing. He relayed that it replaces the existing Ordinance with new standards that align with State laws establishing how fees are calculated and collected. Mr. Nerwinski explained that this Ordinance also requires that all funding be deposited into a designated affordable housing trust fund used exclusively for creating and maintaining affordable housing in the Township.

Mayor Bobbitt asked if there were any questions from Council. Seeing none, he asked if there were any questions from the public. Seeing none, he closed public comment on Ordinance No. 2514-26.

The Ordinance No. 2514-26 was approved on the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL       | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Ms. Farmer    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Giglio    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mr. Kownacki  | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Ms. Santos    | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mayor Bobbitt | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

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### Adoption of Ordinances

There was no adoption of Ordinances.

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### Manager's Report –

Mr. Nerwinski submitted invoice listings for the month of April 2026 in the amount of \$2,733,030.61.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this is the time and place for the public hearing and adoption of the *2026 Municipal Budget* of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey. He explained that notice of this hearing was provided in accordance of the law, and a complete copy of the Budget has been made available for public inspection, as required, and made available upon request. Mr. Nerwinski shared that

there have been several budget-related public meetings where the 2026 Budget message was read into record, and all appropriate department heads have made presentations and answered any questions posed to them. He relayed that on several occasions, he and Municipal CFO, Peter Kiriakatis, have met with Council to go over the details of the Budget as introduced, and he has followed up with every inquiry. At this time, Mr. Nerwinski asked that the Resolution authorizing the Budget to be read by title only, as allowed by law under N.J.S.A. 40A:4-8, be voted upon by the Governing Body, which will require a motion, a second, and a polling of the Clerk.

Resolution No. 164-26 (12-A) was approved by the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL       | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Ms. Farmer    | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Ms. Giglio    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mr. Kownacki  | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Santos    | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |
| Mayor Bobbitt | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

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Mr. Nerwinski stated that this is the public hearing on the calendar year 2026 *Municipal Budget*, Township of Lawrence, which is now open. If members of the public have any objections, they are able to come forth and state those objections.

Mayor Bobbitt stated that anyone from the public can feel free to come to the podium and ask any questions they may have about the 2026 Municipal Budget. Seeing none, Mayor Bobbitt closed public comment on Resolution 165-26.

Mr. Nerwinski thanked Mr. Kiriakatis and the department heads for their hard work, talent, and dedication throughout the entire Budget process, sharing that it has been a pleasure to work with them and assist them in realizing their visions. Mr. Nerwinski stated that they take pride in what they do, and this Municipal Budget reflects their hard work and commitment to respecting tax payers, and ensuring that central services are maintained and improved—when possible—in a fiscally-sound way. He stated that, although Mr. Kiriakatis is retiring, there will be a smooth transference of succession with the hiring of Municipal Treasurer, Mr. Christopher Hart, and he looks forward to continuing to work with him as well.

Mayor Bobbitt thanked Mr. Kiriakatis for all of his hard work over the ten years that he has been on Council. He noted that Mr. Kiriakatis has always been available to answer his questions, has explained how the budget cycle works, and has provided clear definitions for terms such as "surplus," "revenue streams," and "appropriations and levy cap."

Ms. Farmer thanked Mr. Kiriakatis and Mr. Nerwinski for the information that they share with Council and the tremendous work that they do on behalf of the residents of Lawrence Township.

Mr. Nerwinski proceeded to offer the 2026 Municipal Budget for adoption by vote by the Governing Body, which will require a motion, a second, and a polling of the Clerk.

Resolution No. 165-26 (12-B) was approved by the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Ms. Farmer	X						X
Ms. Giglio	X						
Mr. Kownacki	X						
Ms. Santos	X					X	
Mayor Bobbitt	X						

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

Attorney's Report –

Municipal Attorney, Arthur Sypek, Jr., stated that he had provided Council with a detailed memorandum earlier that day regarding the Request For Proposal (RFP) process for the Neighborhood Center that he and Mr. Nerwinski have been working on. He explained that it is a fluid document that will change as the RFP is fine-tuned, and it is his understanding that there will be a final document ready for the public on May 15th.

Mayor Bobbitt conveyed his appreciation for all of the work that Mr. Sypek and Mr. Nerwinski have done in preparing this document. He recognized that both Ms. Farmer and Ms. Giglio have worked very hard on the Mayor's Task Force, and he believes the community deserves for Council to have a legally and operationally sound RFP to ensure that the visions and values of the Task Force are realized.

Further discussion was had regarding the possibility of stakeholders viewing the RFP before it goes out to bid, and the appreciation for Council as they work to complete the RFP process.

Clerk's Report –

Municipal Clerk, Tonya Carter, reported that financial disclosures were distributed on April 1st, with a deadline of April 30th.

She disclosed that *Vote By Mail* ballots were sent out on April 18th, and the ballot box was officially opened on Monday. Ms. Carter explained that May 12th is the deadline to register to vote, and Early Voting will begin on May 26 through May 31st. She noted that Primary Election Day is June 2nd, from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Finally, Ms. Carter informed Council that ABC licenses have been mailed out.

Unfinished Business –

There was no unfinished business.

Old Business/New Business –

There was no old business/new business.

Public Participation (3-minute limitation per speaker) –

Mr. Christopher Woolley stated that he has given the award presentation flyers to Council, and asked permission to now distribute the flyers to the public.

Mayor Bobbitt relayed that it was fine, as long as he does not create a disturbance.

Ms. Martha Friend asked if her address was actually considered "Lawrenceville Road," or "Lawrence Road."

Mr. Nerwinski responded that MapQuest and Google both recognize it as "Lawrenceville Road;" however, it is, in fact, "Lawrence Road."

Ms. Martha Friend relayed that she previously experienced massive traffic along Route 206 due to a storm-related road closure; however, she had no way of knowing that the road ahead was closed. She asked if, in the future, this type of information could be provided to the community via the Township's digital signs to help residents avoid massive traffic jams.

Ms. Sylwia Kobus wished to take this opportunity to thank all of the department heads for doing a wonderful job on the Municipal Budget and for all of their hard work on behalf of Lawrence Township residents. She thanked the staff of Lawrence Township for all that they do to "make our community great."

Resolutions

Resolution Nos. 166-26 (18-D.1) through Nos. 169-26 (18-H.1) were approved by the following roll call vote:

COUNCIL	AYE	NAY	PRESENT	ABSENT	ABSTAIN	MOVE	SECOND
Ms. Farmer	X						
Ms. Giglio	X						
Mr. Kownacki	X						X
Ms. Santos	X					X	
Mayor Bobbitt	X						

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

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Mayor Bobbitt read the following statement into record:

*To set the table for Council's discussion of the extension of the Manager's contract, let me share some background on the hiring process of Kevin Nerwinski as Township Manager. In the fall of 2016, then Township Manager, Richard Krawczun, submitted his letter of resignation to the Township Council, effective January 2017. With no obvious succession plan in place, Council negotiated with the Manager to stay on until May 2017 to allow for a national search to take place. Council hired an executive search consultant to run the search and interview process, and Council had its first meeting in November of 2016 and placed advertisements on December 15 to be run until January 15, 2017. During that period, Council received a number of resumes and letters of recommendation from across the country. On January 28, we had screening interviews for 8 candidates. A few weeks later, we had our final interviews for 4 candidates. During this time, Council asked the consultant to look at the outgoing Manager's contract as well as other similar townships to help guide the creation of a compensation package for the successful applicant. By the end of March 2017, after 4 months of interviews and deliberations, Council decided to extend an offer of employment to Mr. Nerwinski. This offer by Council was based on not only his two interviews and resume, but also letters of recommendation like this one:*

*December 28, 2016*

*Dear Honorable Mayor and Council, Township of Lawrence*

*It is with absolute pleasure that I recommend Kevin Nerwinski for the position of Municipal Manager. I have worked very closely with Kevin during my tenure as a Councilman on the Lawrence Township Council, particularly the years I served as Mayor. I have always been impressed by his problem-solving skills and attention to detail. Kevin not only possesses the aptitude needed for this position, he has firsthand experience in Township affairs. Having served as Township Attorney, he is well aware of every possible legal matter that the Township could encounter.*

*From Tax appeals to our Land Use Ordinance, Kevin has defended the Town well. He has even been a second voice on many labor relation matters. Having this prior knowledge, coupled with his expertise as a jurist, will save the Town a considerable amount of money in legal counseling. As Township Municipal Judge, Kevin is extremely well versed in the Municipal Court system and has an intimate knowledge of the largest division in the Township, the Police Department. As a lifelong resident of the Township, Kevin grew up in our parks and participated in our recreation programs and is well suited to preside over the daily operations of this Town. Without a doubt, I confidently recommend Kevin for the position. Kevin is honest, ethically responsible, dependable, and incredibly hard-working. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like me to expand on my recommendation.*

*Sincerely, Gregory J. Puliti*

*The contract was formally agreed at the April 18 meeting, and he took over as Township Manager on May 1, 2017. Before Mr. Nerwinski stepped into the role, I had a candid conversation with him as I had never worked with him during his time as Municipal Attorney. My confidence in Kevin grew and by the end of our meeting I told him that disagreements would happen but as long as each one does what we think is best for the Township, I can live with those disagreements. Serving as Mayor in 2018 and 19, Kevin was a partner with me as we worked together to incorporate some of my goals as Mayor. The solar panels outside this building along with the electric cars for the Township are a result of working together, Council and Manager. I could go on about the successes we've had as a Township, but I'd like to give my colleagues a chance to discuss the motion.*

Ms. Farmer thanked Mayor Bobbitt for providing Council with this background information. She stated that she has had the opportunity to work closely with Mr. Nerwinski, and has found him to be dependable, available, and a tremendous resource in educating her on what it takes to run a town.

Ms. Giglio stated that, although she has only been a Councilwoman for two months, she has enjoyed meeting with Mr. Nerwinski on the Monday prior to the Council meeting to review information, as there is much to learn and process. She expressed that he has been a wonderful resource and she enjoys working with him.

Mr. Kownacki stated that he has worked with Mr. Nerwinski for many years, and wished to thank him, noting that he has learned a great deal from him and holds him in high regard. He added that the residents Lawrence Township share that respect and appreciate the positive changes he has made in their community, as well as the progress he has brought to the Township.

Ms. Santos thanked Mr. Nerwinski for his guidance and for always being available to answer any questions. She also emphasized the importance of recognizing that Councilmembers are taxpaying residents as well and, speaking as a resident, expressed her appreciation for the services provided and the way the Township is managed. She

added that Lawrence is a wonderful place in which to live, and that she is proud to call it home.

Resolution No. 170-26 (18-H.2) was approved by the following roll call vote:

| COUNCIL       | AYE | NAY | PRESENT | ABSENT | ABSTAIN | MOVE | SECOND |
|---------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| Ms. Farmer    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Ms. Giglio    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mr. Kownacki  | X   |     |         |        |         |      | X      |
| Ms. Santos    | X   |     |         |        |         |      |        |
| Mayor Bobbitt | X   |     |         |        |         | X    |        |

Cited Resolutions are spread in their entirety in the Resolution Books of the Township of Lawrence.

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### Council Initiatives/Liaison Reports –

Ms. Santos reported that the Business and Economic Growth Committee met on April 14<sup>th</sup>. She relayed that they created a website, *locallawrence.com*, where people can find information pertaining to local businesses. Additionally, the committee is searching for a new student representative for the 2026-2027 school year, with applications due June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ms. Farmer shared that the Trails and Open Space Stewardship Advisory Committee did not have a formal meeting; however, they did have a walk on Saturday along the Delaware and Raritan Canal Towpath. She stated that it was a beautiful opportunity to see what is currently in the area and how the two paths connect.

Ms. Farmer reported that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI) had a community roundtable on Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall in the lower level chambers from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. *Immigration Equity* and *Building Trust in Our Community* were the topics of discussion. She relayed that they are in the midst of planning their *Juneteenth* celebration, which will take place on June 18<sup>th</sup>, on the front steps of Town Hall.

Ms. Farmer relayed that the Historic Preservation Committee had a lively and robust discussion at their meeting regarding the Gulick House. They decided that, because of what is transpiring, it may be a good idea to have a community meeting to educate the public about the historical homes found within Lawrence Township.

Ms. Giglio reported that the Recreation Department is holding a town-wide yard sale this weekend, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Saturday through Sunday. Information has been placed on the website for those who are interested.

Mayor Bobbitt shared that the Environmental and Green Advisory Committee is continuing to study storm water regulations and turf fields. He stated that he will continue to keep Council informed of their findings.

Per Ms. Farmer's request, Director of Public Works, Greg Whitehead, updated Council on the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) construction taking place at Exit 69B off of I-295. He relayed that they are building a storm basin to manage water from rain, snowmelt, flash flooding, etc.

Mr. Nerwinski advised that the USDOT will be building a wall at this same location, and he is unsure if the construction taking place is in relation to the wall as well.

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**Written Communications –**

Mayor Bobbitt reported that Council is in receipt of a letter of resignation from Mr. Jeff Johnson, as he intends to resign from the Lawrence Township Zoning Board of Adjustment on May 21, 2026.

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There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

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Tonya D. Carter, Municipal Clerk

Attest:

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Christopher Bobbitt, Mayor