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

June 16, 2026

The following are the Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Lawrence Township Council that was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 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, June 16, 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

Mayor Christopher Bobbitt read the following Resolution recognizing June as LGBTQ+ Pride Month, followed by a Proclamation declaring the First Friday in June to be "National Gun Violence Awareness Day":

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Township of Lawrence is committed to fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful community for all residents, employees, businesses, and visitors, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression; and

WHEREAS, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other LGBTQ+ individuals have made significant contributions to the social, cultural, civic, economic, and educational fabric of our community, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, the month of June is recognized nationally and internationally as LGBTQ+ Pride Month, commemorating the historic Stonewall uprisings and honoring the extensive contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals to the fabric of our society, economy, and culture; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Lawrence recognizes that diversity strengthens our community and that every resident deserves to live free from discrimination, harassment, and prejudice; and

WHEREAS, promoting dignity, respect, and equal opportunity for all people helps create a safer, healthier, and more vibrant community for current and future generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, do hereby recognize June 2026 as LGBTQ+ Pride Month and encourage all residents to celebrate the diversity that enriches our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township reaffirms its commitment to equality, inclusion, and respect for all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township of Lawrence joins communities throughout New Jersey and the nation in honoring the contributions, resilience, and achievements of LGBTQ+ individuals and families.

Dated: June 16, 2026

Councilwoman Amanda Santos wished to comment on last week's Pride Fest, stating that the turnout from the community was wonderful and uplifting despite the heat. She extended a special thank you to *Lawrence Neighbors Together*, Lawrence Township Public Schools, and the Lawrence Township Police Department for all that they did to make the event a success. Ms. Santos expressed that this type of collaboration is what makes Lawrence work and creates the opportunity for special moments such as this. She stated that when the schools, neighbors and the public safety community come together around an event like Pride Fest, it says something about who we are as a Township. Ms. Santos declared that inclusion is not just a value that is spoken about, but a value that is demonstrated, and she is proud to represent this community.

Councilwoman Patricia Farmer shared that she had the opportunity to participate in Pride Fest as well, and stated that it was a tremendous event. She expressed that she

is extremely proud to be a member of Lawrence Township, as it is a community that supports its residents.

Councilwoman Bonnie Giglio wished to remind everyone that the Town Hall lights are lit up in Pride Month colors for the entire month of June.

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Proclamation

2026 LAWRENCE PROCLAMATION
DECLARING THE FIRST FRIDAY IN JUNE
TO BE NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY

This proclamation declares the first Friday in June to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day in the Township of Lawrence to honor and remember all victims and survivors of gun violence and to declare that we as a country must do more to end this public health crisis.

WHEREAS, every day, nearly 130 people in the United States are killed by gun violence and more than 200 are shot and wounded, with an average of more than 19,000-gun homicides every year; and

WHEREAS, people in the United States are 26 times more likely to die by gun homicide than people in other high-income countries; and

WHEREAS, in New Jersey has 442-gun deaths every year, with a rate of 4.8 deaths per 100,000 people, a crisis that costs the state $5.3 billion each year, of which $168.9 million is paid by taxpayers. New Jersey has the 4th lowest rate of gun deaths in the US; and

WHEREAS, gun homicides and assaults are concentrated in cities, with more than half of all gun homicides in the nation occurring in 42 cities; and

WHEREAS, cities across the nation, including in Lawrence, are working to end the senseless violence with evidence-based solutions; and

WHEREAS, protecting public safety in the communities they serve is mayors' highest responsibility; and

WHEREAS, support for the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens goes hand-in-hand with keeping guns away from those who are a danger to themselves or others; and

WHEREAS, mayors, councilmembers, and law enforcement officers—in partnership with local violence intervention activists and resources—know their
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communities best, are the most familiar with local criminal activity and how to address it, and are best positioned to understand how to keep their citizens safe; and

WHEREAS, gun violence prevention is more important than ever as we see gun violence continue to impact communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, in January 2013, Hadiya Pendleton was tragically shot and killed at age 15; and on June 5, 2026 to recognize the 29th birthday of Hadiya Pendleton (born: June 2, 1997), people across the United States will recognize National Gun Violence Awareness Day and wear orange in tribute to — 1) Hadiya Pendleton and other victims of gun violence; and (2) the loved ones of those victims; and

WHEREAS, the idea was inspired by a group of Hadiya's friends, who asked their classmates to commemorate her life by wearing orange; they chose this color because hunters wear orange to announce themselves to other hunters when out in the woods, and orange is a color that symbolizes the value of human life; and

WHEREAS, anyone can join this campaign by pledging to wear orange on June 5, the first Friday in June 2026, to help raise awareness about gun violence; and

WHEREAS, by wearing orange on June 5, 2026 people across the United States will raise awareness about gun violence and honor the lives of gun violence victims and survivors; and

WHEREAS, we renew our commitment to reduce gun violence and pledge to do all we can to keep firearms out of the hands of people who should not have access to them and encourage responsible gun ownership to help keep our families and communities safe.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Mayor Christopher Bobbitt of the Township of Lawrence, declares the first Friday in June, June 5, 2026, to be National Gun Violence Awareness Day. I encourage all citizens to support their local communities' efforts to prevent the tragic impacts of gun violence and to save lives.

Date: May 19, 2026

Mayor Bobbitt next introduced Robert Fuller, Executive Director of the Ewing-Lawrence Sewerage Authority (ELSA), who briefly spoke about Resolution No. #216-26. Mr. Fuller provided background pertaining to the need for replacing ageing pipelines, as well as the construction of a new pump station in Ewing near Katzenbach School that will begin in September of 2026. He stated that this is a Ewing Township project and Lawrence Township will not be responsible for any of the associated costs; however, because ELSA is a joint utility shared by Ewing and Lawrence Townships and has been charged with carrying out the project, ELSA is legally required to obtain Lawrence Township's authorization before proceeding.

Further discussion took place amongst Council, Municipal Manager Kevin Nerwinski, and Mr. Fuller regarding the need to approve the project by Resolution, due to the fact that ELSA is a joint utility shared by Ewing and Lawrence Townships and is commissioning the project using designated funds. The discussion also clarified that Lawrence Township would incur no cost associated with this project.

Mr. Nerwinski asked Council to consider voting early on Resolution No. 216-26 (18-H.3) *Authorizing Resolution of the Township Council Approving and Consenting to the Issuance of Not-to-Exceed $18,000,000 of Obligations by the Ewing Lawrence Sewerage Authority through the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank Financing Program* to allow for Mr. Fuller and his team to leave, as their attendance would no longer be necessary once the Resolution had been considered, to which Council agreed.

Resolution No. 216-26 (18-H.3) 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					X	
Mayor Bobbitt	X						

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

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:

<u>Chapter 10-22 Manner of Addressing Council</u>: A person may address the Council upon recognition by the Chair. A person addressing the Council shall write down their name and address on the sign-up sheet, shall step up to the microphone, shall 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 any discussion, either directly or through a member of the

Council, without permission of the Chair. No question shall be asked of Councilperson except through the Chair.

Chapter 10-23 Decorum at Council Meetings: Any person making impertinent or slanderous remarks or who shall become boisterous while addressing the Council shall forthwith be barred from further audience before the Council by the Presiding Officer unless permission to continue or again address the Council be granted by the majority vote of Council.

Ms. Martha Friend thanked Council for acknowledging Pride Fest and for this Resolution, explaining that it is not performative and does matter. She recognized all those who were involved in making Pride Fest a success, appreciating that they came together for the singular purpose of making sure everyone feels welcomed, respected, safe, and known. In addition, she thanked the Lawrence Township Police and the Lawrence Township School District for their partnership with *Lawrence Neighbors Together*, as well as the Lawrence Township staff for their help with the process.

Mr. Chris Wooley stated that he is a forty-five-year Lawrence Township resident and is proud to call the Township his home. He shared that he has had the pleasure of working with Ms. Martha Friend, and thanked her for her leadership and strong work ethic. Mr. Wooley next expressed that the Community Center needs a great deal of work to reopen, and believes the community can come together to bring the Community Center into operation. Mr. Wooley created a form for residents to complete, which he will then collect, for those who wish to be involved in this process.

Mr. William B. Holmes Sr. stated that he has been a resident of Lawrence Township for over fifty years, and disclosed that he did not see advertising recognizing Lawrence Township's Juneteenth celebration. He believes Juneteenth is an important part of American history and the Township should do more throughout the community to recognize this notable event.

Ms. Farmer stated that Juneteenth has been declared a national holiday, and the Township will hold a celebration on Thursday, June 18th in observance of the occasion. Further discussion was held regarding the plan to read an official Proclamation from Council at the gathering to recognize this historic event.

Ms. Joan Brams stated that she is a thirty-three-year resident of Lawrence Township, and declared that she is excited about the legacy aspect of the Community Center project pertaining to the idea of creating a museum honoring the roots of this facility. She volunteered her help on the project, and thanked Council for committing to such an important endeavor.

Review and Revisions of Agenda

Mr. Sypek stated that Resolution No. 218-26 declares the wrong lots—6, 18 and 19—which should be removed and replaced with lots 2 and 3, explaining that this is a de minimis change, and does not alter anything involving the substantive nature of the Resolution.

On a motion by Councilwoman Santos, seconded by Councilwoman Farmer, Resolution No. 218-26 (18-H.5) was amended to add the following change: *Whereas the proposed transaction contemplates a transfer of the Property by Deed of Block 3801, Lots 2 and 3 to JAG Princeton Pike Urban Renewal LLC (JAG) with lot 6, 18 and 19 being retained by Canvas, and assignment of all redevelopment and financial agreement rights and obligations to JAG with regard to Lots 2 and 3.*

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

Adoption of Minutes

On a motion by Councilwoman Patricia Farmer, seconded by Councilwoman Amanda Santos, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 19, 2026 were approved without corrections on 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						

Awarding or Rejecting of Bids

On a motion by Ms. Santos, seconded by Ms. Farmer, Resolution (9-A) Authorizing Awarding of Bid to Master Build and Design for Rehabilitation at 42 Gilpin Court was presented for adoption.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that the bid amount is for $21,335.00 under the Township's Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Resolution No. 197-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, bids were received and publicly opened for the rehabilitation of 42 Gilpin Court; and

WHEREAS, three (3) 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 $21,335.00 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	$21,335.00

; and

WHEREAS, Master Build and Design performed satisfactorily; and

WHEREAS, Obaid Alam, owner of 42 Gilpin 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 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 Jersey 07740 for the purposes of rehabilitating 42 Gilpin 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: June 16, 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 Ms. Farmer, Resolution (9-B) Authorizing Awarding of Bid to Unlimited Builders Construction for Rehabilitation at 128 Graf Avenue was presented for adoption.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this is for a bid of $24,650.00 under the Township's Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Program.
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Resolution No. 198-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, bids were received and publicly opened for the rehabilitation of 128 Graf Avenue; and

WHEREAS, three (3) 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 $24,650.00 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	$24,650.00

; and

WHEREAS, Unlimited Builders Construction performed satisfactorily; and

WHEREAS, Janet Ellis, owner of 128 Graf 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 and the Municipal Clerk hereby authorize the acceptance of the bid and the execution of a contract with Unlimited Builders Construction, PO Box 90529, Hamilton, New Jersey 08650 for the purposes of rehabilitating 128 Graf 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: June 16, 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 Ms. Farmer, Resolution (9-C) Authorizing Awarding of Bid to Silviu Nedelcu Painting and Remodeling for Rehabilitation at 40 Devon Court was presented for adoption.

Nerwinski stated that this is for a bid of $29,600.00 under the Township's Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Resolution No. 199-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, bids were received and publicly opened for the rehabilitation of 40 Devon Court; and

WHEREAS, three (3) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was Silviu Nedelcu Painting & Remodeling that submitted a bid in the amount of $29,600.00 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	$29,600.00

; and

WHEREAS, Silviu Nedelcu Painting & Remodeling performed satisfactorily; and

WHEREAS, Amanda & John Jorgensen, owner of 40 Devon 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 and the Municipal Clerk hereby authorize the acceptance of the bid and the execution of a contract with Silviu Nedelcu Painting & Remodeling, 4475 Route 27, Princeton, New Jersey 08540 for the purposes of rehabilitating 40 Devon 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: June 16, 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 Ms. Farmer, Resolution (9-D) Authorizing Awarding of Bid 26-03: 2026 Residential Concrete Sidewalk Improvement Program to TC Landscape Construction Group, Inc. was presented for adoption.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this is for the 2026 Sidewalk Improvement Program in the amount of $148,818.00.

Resolution No. 200-26

WHEREAS, on Wednesday, June 3, 2026 bids were received and publicly opened for the project known as 2026 Residential Concrete Sidewalk Improvement Program; and

WHEREAS, seven (7) bids were received and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder was TC Landscape Construction Group, Inc. who submitted a bid in the amount of $148,818.00; and

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

Acct.	Ord. No.	Name	Amount
C-04-55-516-253	2493-25	Various Road Improvements	$36,001
C-04-55-516-242	2493-25	Various Road Improvements	$100,000
C-04-55-516-241	2493-25	Various Road Improvements	$12,817

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 Engineer, the Mayor and Municipal Clerk are hereby authorized to execute a contract with TC Landscape Construction Group, Inc., 156 Grand Central Parkway, Bayville, NJ 08721 in the amount of $148,818.00;

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: June 16, 2026
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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 Ms. Farmer, Resolution (9-E) Authorizing Rejection of Bid 26-07: 2025 NJDOT Trust Fund Improvements Brunswick Pike Pedestrian Safety Improvements from Seacoast Construction LLC was presented for adoption.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this bid is being rejected because the lowest responsible bid, which was submitted by Seacoast Construction Inc in the amount of $696,651.61, substantially exceeded the engineer's cost estimate and the budgeted amount for the project.

Resolution No. 224-26

WHEREAS, on Thursday, June 4, 2026 a bid was received and publicly opened for the project known as Bid No. 26-07: 2025 NJDOT Trust Fund Improvements Brunswick Pike Pedestrian Safety Improvements; and

WHEREAS, one (1) bid was received, opened and reviewed by the appropriate Township Officials; and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bidder for the base bid was Seacoast Construction, Inc. who submitted an amount of $696,651.61, and

WHEREAS, the bid amount substantially exceeds the engineer’s cost estimate and the budgeted amount for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Engineer has recommended that all bids be rejected.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, that the bid received for the 2025 NJDOT Trust Fund Improvements Brunswick Pike Pedestrian Safety Improvements is hereby rejected pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-13.2a, b and d, due to the fact that the bid substantially exceeds the engineer’s cost estimate and the budget amount for the project.

Adopted: June 16, 2026

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

Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY ON LANDOVER ROAD FOR OPEN SPACE PURPOSES."

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this relates to 36 Landover Road (i.e., the original Lawrence Neighborhood Center). The acquisition of this property and building is intended to preserve the neighborhood's history.

Further discussion was had between Council and Mr. Nerwinski regarding the fact that this project qualifies under the preservation of historical landmarks component of the Open Space Program, with Council expressing its enthusiasm for the rehabilitation and preservation of the building for the benefit of the Township residents.

The Ordinance No. 2519-26 was approved on 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						

Adoption of Ordinances

Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE IN MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 840 PRETTY BROOK ROAD (BLOCK 7801, LOTS 33, 34 AND 35) FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.

Mr. Nerwinski stated that this pertains to the portion of land running along the roadway that will be used for extending the Lawrence Hopewell Trail. This ordinance is required by law for the Township to acquire the subject land through voluntary negotiations with the property owner or to seek acquisition through a condemnation action if negotiations fail. He explained that this is a critical and final piece of the Lawrence Hopewell Trail (LHT) and is needed to provide for pedestrian safety.

Ordinance No. 2517-26

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE IN MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 840 PRETTY BROOK ROAD (BLOCK 7801, LOTS 33, 34, and 35) FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES

WHEREAS, the Township of Lawrence ("Township") has determined that a need exists to acquire a "Right of Way" easement over an approximately 6,800± square foot portion of certain real property located at 840 Pretty Brook Road within the Township, designated as Lots 33, 34 and 35 in Block 7801 on the Lawrence Township Tax Map (the "Property"), in connection with the extension of the Lawrence Hopewell Trail; and

WHEREAS, the Property is more specifically identified as "Parcel E2" in the legal description annexed hereto as "Exhibit A," dated October 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the extension of the Lawrence Hopewell Trail will promote recreation, healthier lifestyles, better mobility, and a cleaner environment within the Township, and will offer safe public access for individuals to various sections of Lawrence Township and Hopewell Township; and

WHEREAS, the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Township Master Plan discusses the Lawrence Hopewell Trail's (the "Trail") provision of opportunities for recreation and the connection of the Township's open space and recreational sites, and that the Trail will improve circulation and access and provide additional recreational opportunities within the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township determines that said uses are public purposes and will promote the general health and welfare of the community, and that the acquisition of an interest in the Property is in the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the Township is authorized pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1, *et seq*. to acquire the Property, or an interest therein, for the public purposes set forth herein; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-5(a)(1), "any municipality, by ordinance, may provide for the acquisition of any real property, capital improvement or personal property: (1) By purchase, gift, devise, lease exchange, condemnation, or installment purchase agreement;" and

WHEREAS, the Township may acquire the Property either through voluntary negotiations or through the power of eminent domain pursuant to the Eminent Domain Act, N.J.S.A. 20:3-1, *et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, the Eminent Domain Act provides a procedural process for the Township to engage in formal negotiations with the Property owner, and in the event such negotiations are unsuccessful, to file a condemnation action with the court in order to

acquire title and establish the amount of just compensation to be paid by the Township for the takings; and

WHEREAS, the Township prefers to acquire the Property through voluntary negotiations and desires at this time to hold discussions and negotiations with the owner of the Property to enable the Township to acquire said Property; and

WHEREAS, to enable and facilitate good faith negotiations, the Township obtained an appraisal of the Property prepared by Richard J. Carabelli, Jr., MAI of Martin Appraisal Associates, Inc., dated October 8, 2025 (the "Appraisal"); and

WHEREAS, the Appraisal established the market value of the acquisition in the Property to be $19,800.00; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Eminent Domain Act, the municipality is required to tender an offer of compensation to the property owner for the property, which offer cannot be in an amount less than the approved appraisal; and

WHEREAS, passage of the within ordinance is a legal prerequisite to initiating formal negotiations with the owner of the Property and ultimately to acquiring the Property; and

WHEREAS, funds are available from the Township's capital funds to facilitate the acquisition of the Property.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, in the County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The preamble to this Ordinance is hereby incorporated as if more fully set forth herein.

2. The Township is hereby authorized and directed to initiate proceedings pursuant to the Eminent Domain Act, N.J.S.A. 20:3-1, *et seq.*, to acquire for public use, by voluntary conveyance or by condemnation, a Right of Way easement in an approximately 6,800± square foot portion of certain real property and improvements, if any, located at 840 Pretty Brook Road within the Township, designated as Lots 33, 34 and 35 in Block 7801 on the Lawrence Township Tax Map, more specifically identified in the annexed Exhibit A (the "Property"), and in connection therewith, to do such acts as are required by law to acquire the referenced property.

3. The Appraisal dated October 8, 2025, prepared by Richard J. Carabelli, Jr., MAI of Martin Appraisal Associates, Inc., is hereby approved.

4. The Township, through its appropriate staff, employees, professionals, and officials, is hereby further authorized and directed to take all such steps as may be

advisable or necessary pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1, *et seq.* and N.J.S.A. 20:3-1, *et seq.* to acquire the above-referenced Property, including, but not limited to, conducting inspections, obtaining appraisals, surveys, title searches, environmental assessments and/or other due diligence reports, to make an offer to the record owner of the Property in an amount of not less than the appraised value, and to engage in bona fide negotiations with the property owner, including by making such other and higher counteroffers as may be deemed reasonable and necessary to acquire the Property.

5. The Mayor, Administrator, Clerk, Municipal Attorney, and all other appropriate staff, employees and officials, are hereby authorized and directed to execute and file any and all such actions or documents and undertake any and all such further acts as may be necessary to accomplish the purposes hereof.

6. The Township hereby authorizes the utilization of funds from the Township's capital funds for the acquisition the Property.

7. The determination to complete the acquisition of the Property upon the acceptance of an offer by the owner of the Property, or to file a Declaration of Taking and make a deposit into court shall abide the enactment of a further resolution authorizing same.

8. If any section, paragraph, subdivision, clause or provision of this ordinance shall be adjudged invalid, such adjudication shall apply only to the section, paragraph, subdivision, clause or provision so adjudged and the remainder of the ordinance shall remain valid and effective.

9. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication, as required by law.

Adopted: June 16, 2026

The Ordinance No. 2517-26 was approved on 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						

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Mayor Bobbitt read by title, an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE, COUNTY OF MERCER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY ESTABLISHING THE LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ARTS COMMISSION."
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Ms. Santos explained that this has been created to establish a new committee for elevating the arts within the community, and will include many forms of art including physical art, graphic art, and music.

Ms. Farmer stated that she is very excited for this commission as there is an abundance of talent to be found within the Lawrence Township community. She declared that this will be a tremendous physical and economic opportunity for the Town.

Mr. Fred Vereen stated that he would like to see the Arts Council recognize the *Crossing Inn* as a historic site as many popular Black entertainers performed there in the building's heyday, such as Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, and Little Richard.

Ms. Farmer paraphrased a John F. Kennedy quote, stating that the connection between the arts and progress in government is easy to feel but hard to explain. She expressed that, within the work of the Arts Commission, she is eager to address the serious issues— both good and bad—currently facing our government.

Ordinance No. 2518-26

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE, COUNTY OF MERCER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, ESTABLISHING THE LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ARTS COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Township of Lawrence recognizes that the arts enrich civic life, strengthen community identity, promote cultural understanding, and enhance quality of life for residents of all ages; and

WHEREAS, a vibrant arts community contributes to local economic development by attracting visitors, supporting local businesses, activating public spaces, and encouraging investment in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township desires to foster partnerships among artists, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and residents in support of cultural programming and creative placemaking; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council finds it to be in the public interest to establish a formal advisory body to promote and coordinate arts-related initiatives within the Township;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Township Council of the Township of Lawrence, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1. CREATION

There is hereby established a permanent advisory body to be known as the Lawrence Township Arts Commission (“Arts Commission”).

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Commission shall be to advise the Mayor and Township Council on matters relating to arts, culture, and creative initiatives within the Township, and to encourage the growth and accessibility of the arts for residents and visitors.

SECTION 3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Commission shall have the authority to study, recommend, and assist with matters including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Promoting public awareness of arts and cultural opportunities in the Township.

2. Advising on policies and initiatives that support artists, arts organizations, and cultural programming.

3. Recommending opportunities for public art, murals, performances, exhibitions, and creative use of public spaces.

4. Encouraging partnerships with schools, libraries, community organizations, businesses, and regional institutions.

5. Assisting in the development of Township-sponsored arts events, festivals, concerts, and educational programs.

6. Identifying grant opportunities, sponsorships, and outside funding sources to support arts initiatives.

7. Recommending strategies to strengthen Lawrence Township's identity as a destination for arts and culture.

8. Maintaining, or recommending the creation of, a directory of local artists, performers, and arts organizations.

9. Submitting an annual report to the Township Council summarizing activities, recommendations, and future goals.

SECTION 4. LIMITATIONS

The Commission shall serve in an advisory capacity only and shall have no authority to bind the Township contractually, incur debt, expend public funds except as specifically appropriated by the Township Council, or otherwise exercise executive or legislative powers.

SECTION 5. MEMBERSHIP

A. The Commission shall consist of seven (7) regular members, residents of the Township whenever practicable, appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Township Council.

B. Appointments should, to the extent possible, reflect experience or interest in one or more of the following areas:

- Performing arts
- Visual arts
- Arts education
- Arts administration
- Community engagement
- Local business or economic development
- Historic or cultural preservation

C. The Township Council may designate one member of Council to serve as liaison to the Commission. Such liaison may be voting or non-voting as determined by Council policy.

SECTION 6. TERMS OF OFFICE

A. Initial appointments shall be made as follows:

- Two members for one-year terms
- Two members for two-year terms
- Three members for three-year terms

B. Thereafter, all regular appointments shall be for terms of three (3) years.

C. Vacancies occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired term only.

SECTION 7. ORGANIZATION

A. The Commission shall annually elect from among its members a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

B. The Commission may also appoint a Secretary, who may be a member or designated staff support.

C. The Commission may adopt bylaws and rules of procedure consistent with Township ordinances and applicable law.

SECTION 8. MEETINGS

A. The Commission shall meet at least quarterly, and more frequently as necessary.

B. All meetings shall comply with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.

SECTION 9. STAFF SUPPORT AND FUNDING

The Township may provide administrative support, meeting space, and such appropriations as the Township Council may determine necessary and appropriate through the annual municipal budget process.

SECTION 10. SEVERABILITY

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

SECTION 11. REPEALER

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 12. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication according to law.

Adopted: June 16, 2026

The Ordinance No. 2518-26 was approved on 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						

Manager's Report –

Mr. Nerwinski submitted invoice listings for the month of June 2026 in the amount of $1,469,180.04.

Mr. Nerwinski reported that he has six items that he would like to quickly review.

1) Designation of 3641 as an Area in Need of Redevelopment – A Resolution for the designation of 3641 as an Area in Need of Redevelopment is planned to be on the agenda for the July Council meeting. It was an issue that was investigated and approved at the April 20, 2026 meeting, and the Resolution was passed by the Lawrence Township Planning Board on May 4, 2026. The community will be notified both statutorily and by posting on the Township website, social media sites, and newsletters.

2) Anne Demarais Nature Center – Superintendent of Recreation, Nancy Bergen, reported that work to improve the interior of the Nature Center has begun with mural paintings on the walls, and plans are in place for additional improvements in the future.

3) Roundabout/Traffic Signal Projects – An internal administrative meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2026 in Ewing Township to discuss the coordination for the Federal City Road/Bull Run Road roundabout and Federal City Road/Federal Point traffic signal projects. Discussions will include timelines, estimated costs, and DOT funding, with participation from Ewing, Lawrence and Hopewell officials.

4) Finance Department – Municipal Treasurer, Christopher Hart, will be assuming the role of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) effective July 1, 2026. He explained that former CFO, Peter Kiriakatis, has agreed to stay on for an as-yet-unconfirmed period, as longtime employee of 49 years, Supervisor of Accounts, Linda Lutes, retired on June 1, 2026. Mr. Nerwinski wished to publicly thank Ms. Lutes for her long-term, excellent service to the Lawrence Township community, and stated that the Township has lost an employee with vast institutional knowledge who will be difficult to replace. He reported that the Township posted the vacancy and received many applications for the position of Auditor/Accountant Trainee, noting that this person will assume most of Ms. Lutes' responsibilities.

5) Final Report from CGR – Public Safety Director, Christopher Longo, has advised that the Township expects to receive the final report from CGR within the next several weeks. CGR was selected through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process to conduct a comprehensive study evaluating the potential consolidation and/or centralization of Fire and EMS services within Lawrence Township, including recommendations regarding the optimal location or locations for the delivery of such services.

6) State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) – A meeting will be held with Township insurance representatives and benefits professionals to discuss potential alternatives to continued participation in the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP). Municipalities

participating in SHBP have experienced significant annual cost increases, including a 36.25% increase this past year. However, he explained that Lawrence Township's workforce is represented by seven separate collective bargaining units, with applicable labor agreements requiring that any replacement health benefits plan must provide coverage that is *equal to or better* than the benefits currently offered, so any potential transition must be carefully evaluated to ensure all compliance requirements are satisfied.

Attorney's Report –

Mr. Sypek stated that the New Jersey Supreme Court issued a unanimous decision last week with regard to the Open Public Records Act (OPRA), which specified that any Township business conducted through a private email account is subject to OPRA laws. It is his recommendation that all Township business be conducted using Lawrence Township governmental email accounts only.

Clerk's Report –

Municipal Clerk, Ms. Tonya Carter, informed Council that the Primary Election took place on Tuesday, June 2, 2026 and reported that there were no issues. In addition, she relayed that she gave each Councilmember a summary report of the Election results.

Ms. Carter disclosed that there are two new board applications for Council to review. In addition, with respect to the recently enacted OPRA legislation, she indicated that the Township has worked diligently to create a hyperlink on its website directing users to the Secretary of State's portal, while also implementing the necessary administrative measures behind the scenes to ensure compliance with the new law. Ms. Carter cautioned against blurring the distinction between social media and official public notices, emphasizing as they serve different purposes and that social media does constitute a legal notice.

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. Fred Vereen thanked Council for their efforts pertaining to the RFP process on behalf of the Community Center, as well as purchasing the property located at 36 Landover Road with the intention to preserve the neighborhood's history. He relayed that this property was the first neighborhood center, and provided Council with a brief history of the center and its surrounding neighborhood, with a more personal note on what it means to him and his family specifically.

Mr. Jim Cleak mentioned, with respect to the earlier comment regarding there being no advertising for the Juneteenth celebration, that there was no communication pertaining to the United State's 250th anniversary either. He also stated that he believed Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) programs pertained to public buildings such as hospitals and schools, and questioned why they were being offered under Resolution Nos. 218 and 219 for private developments.

Further discussion took place between Mayor Bobbitt, Mr. Sypek and Mr. Cleak regarding the affordable housing and nonprofit aspects involved in the Resolution Nos. 218 and 219, as well as the determination that these sites were areas in need of redevelopment, which allowed for the issuance of a PILOT program.

Resolutions

Resolution Nos. 201-26 (18-B.1) through Nos. 215-26 (18-H.2) and Resolution Nos. 217-26 (18-H.4) through Nos. 222-26 (18-H.9) were 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.

Council Initiatives/Liaison Reports –

Ms. Farmer stated that she is involved in the *America's 250th Anniversary* project planning, in association with the Lawrence Historical Society, with many events scheduled to be held on July 4th. She revealed that there will be fireworks, a reading and

reenactment of the Declaration of Independence, along with other planned activities and events.

Ms. Farmer stated that on Thursday, June 18, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI) will be hosting their third annual Juneteenth celebration in recognition of the national holiday.

Ms. Santos stated that the Health Advisory Board met on June 9, 2026, and reported that they were awarded the *Rural Health Grant*, which will allow the Township to expand their efforts to more rural parts of Town. The outreach will include education events and blood pressure readings, with a special effort to support migrant workers and the homebound within the rural areas of the Township.

Ms. Santos reported that the Business and Economic Growth Committee also met on June 9th, and was pleased to announce that seven applications for a Student Liaison have been received, with interviews will be held at the end of the month.

Ms. Giglio reported that the Trails and Open Space Advisory Committee met on June 3, 2026 and were given a presentation from Mercer County Planning Board Secretary, Matthew Zochowski, who reviewed three large projects planned for Lawrence Township. In addition, she stated that the Lawrence Township Master Plan meeting was held last week, and noted that it was very well attended with lots of great dialogue.

Ms. Giglio announced that fireworks will be held on July 1, 2026, with a reading of the Declaration of Independence from "Benjamin Franklin," as well as food trucks, ice cream, live music, and glow sticks offered to attendees to support the fireworks.

Mayor Bobbitt reported that the Environmental and Green Advisory Committee is continuing their turf field research, as well as their conversation with the Watershed Institute about potential improved stormwater regulations. They have been in contact with Municipal Engineer, Mr. James Parvesse, to discuss water quality issues that he encounters on a daily basis in order to determine what course of action would make sense for Lawrence Township to pursue.

Written Communications –

There were no written communications.

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

_____
Tonya D. Carter, Municipal Clerk

Attest:

_____
Christopher Bobbitt, Mayor