

Township of Randolph
Municipal Building
Randolph, NJ
June 10, 2025

A. OPENING OF REGULAR MEETING

1. Opening of the Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Randolph Township Council was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Hathaway. The meeting is held pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice of the meeting has been provided by posting written notice of the time, date, location and to the extent known, the agenda of the meeting in Randolph Township. This notice was posted on the Bulletin Board within Town Hall, it was filed with the Township Clerk, and it was provided to those persons or entities requesting notification. Notice was also provided to the West Morris Reporter and the Morris County Daily Record on November 27, 2024, by emailing them the annual resolution adopted by the Council on November 26, 2024. The annual resolution, which included this meeting date, was advertised in the West Morris Reporter, the official newspaper of the Township of Randolph, on December 5, 2024, and the Daily Record on December 3, 2024. Notice was also provided to TapInto Randolph, the official Township online digital publication, on November 27, 2024. The time change for this meeting was advertised in the West Morris Reporter on April 24, 2025, posted on the Bulletin Board within Town Hall and published on the municipal website.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway

Also Present: Township Manager Poff, Assistant Township Manager Evan Covello, Township Attorney Edward J. Buzak from the Law Office of Surenian, Edwards, Buzak, & Nolan, LLC.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Hathaway led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. APPOINTMENTS

- 1. Student Appointment to Economic Development Committee: Hamza Brelvi**
- 2. Student Appointments to Environmental & Landmarks Advisory Committee: Emma Nisivoccia, Ateesa Mulonso, and Ethan Dougherty**
- 3. Student Appointments to Board of Health: Haley Talati and Kayla Hudak**
- 4. Student Appointment to Recreation Advisory Committee: Anabella Sharkey**

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to approve the appointments. Councilwoman Thornton seconded the motion and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia (Abstained to Emma Nisivoccia's appointment)
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

C. PRESENTATION/PROCLAMATIONS

- 1. Proclaiming June 2025 to be Pride Month**
- 2. Proclaiming Juneteenth Independence Day – June 19, 2025**

Mayor Hathaway read the proclamation into the record.

Councilwoman Carey made a motion to approve the proclamation. Councilwoman Thornton seconded the motion and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

D. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Seeing and hearing none, the public session was closed.

E. MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Poff reported on the following items:

Affordable Housing Update - On June 16, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on the proposed Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, ("HEFSP") which will amend the Township Master Plan. The hearing will take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Township of Randolph Municipal Building. The proposed Housing Element and Fair Share Plan can be viewed on the township's webpage. The key remaining deadlines are:

- June 26 - Public meeting the Township Council will consider the endorsement of the adopted HEFSP.
- August 31 - Deadline for interested parties to challenge the validity of a municipality's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.
- December 31 – Deadline for the township to settle any challenges or provide an explanation about why it will not make all or some of the requested changes.

Review of Public Recreational Bathing Facilities - The Randolph Health Department's Environmental Division has finished its review of 14 public recreational bathing facilities. In coordination with the Randolph Construction Department, it was decided that two pools will not open because they need electrical and bonding certification updates.

Adult Cancer Screenings - The Randolph Township Health Department is partnering with Screen NJ to offer free adult cancer screenings in June. The "Lifesaver" mobile health unit will be available on two dates to provide essential preventative services. The screening in Randolph will take place on June 26, 2025, from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Weis Markets, 146 Center Grove Road. To register for a screening, please call 1-833-727-3665 or visit the ScreenNJ registration website. For more information and to receive screening reminders, you can text "Screen" to 43386.

Police Department Traffic Enforcement - Resulting from the closure of Route 80 and the subsequent increase in traffic in Randolph, the Chief of Police examined the volume of traffic enforcement the department has undertaken on Route 10 as well as on county and local roads. This was done to address speeding, aggressive driving, and other traffic violations.

- Between February 1, 2025, and May 29, 2025, a total of 957 traffic enforcement details were conducted.
- 374 of these were directly on Route 10.
- 583 were on County and local roads.

Primary Election - The Clerk's Office is in the process of preparing for the primary election on June 10, 2025. Important election details, such as early voting dates from June 3 to June 8 at specific locations in Morris County, deadlines for mail-in ballot applications, and information on polling locations, have been gathered and given to the Communications Director to be published on the township website and in the email newsletter. Preparations are ongoing as the office continues to work with the County on the delivery of equipment and machines and to keep designated poll workers updated on procedures.

Local Government Recovery of Unclaimed Property - Unclaimed property consists of many types of intangible and tangible properties that have remained unclaimed by its rightful owner for a specific period of time, including local governments. Examples of unclaimed property include financial assets such as dormant bank accounts, uncashed checks, insurance policy proceeds, and stocks that have been left inactive or forgotten by their owners for a certain period. The abandonment period for each type of property is defined by the Unclaimed Property Statute.

The Unclaimed Property Administration (UPA) in the New Jersey Department of the Treasury is responsible for managing unclaimed property (<https://www.nj.gov/treasury/unclaimed-property/>).

The UPA holds the property until it is claimed by the rightful owner or heir. Owners or heirs can search for and claim their property through the UPA online platform (unclaimedfunds.nj.gov/app/claim-search). The Township Clerk has filed for a total of \$6,439 worth of unclaimed property due the township; the claim is pending processing by the UPA.

Annual Roadside Mowing - The Public Works Department is set to start its yearly roadside mowing using large tractors to cut back high grass and plants along township roads. This project is intended to enhance sight distance and improve visibility for drivers. The project will be repeated for another few months in the late summer.

The Planning & Zoning department is engaged in several activities, including:

- Finalizing tree planting.
- Getting support documents ready for the housing plan.
- Being present at different pre-construction meetings for projects.
- Enforcing open space encroachments.
- Working with the Health Department to coordinate the enforcement of the kennel code.

Parks & Recreation Park Improvement Projects:

- Rosenfarb Park: Obstructing trees have been taken down. The purchase order for playground equipment is being processed. The purchasing department is collaborating with Ben Schaffer and the Township Attorney on bonding paperwork to issue a PO for the basketball court. Playground materials are currently in production, and the project will be scheduled once the materials are ready.
- Heistein Park Protective Safety Netting: The installer received the materials this past weekend. The installation is expected to happen in mid-June.
- Freedom Park Ballfield Lighting: A Purchase Order has been issued to Musco. The project is scheduled for August, after the conclusion of the Day Camp at Freedom Park.

Fire Prevention Inspection Schedule - The Bureau of Fire Prevention is proceeding with its usual inspection schedule. There are no major projects underway at this moment.

Engineering Department Road Improvement Projects - For the Calais Road Phase 2 and South Road Improvements, all concrete work, including curb, sidewalk, and drainage, is finished for both roads. The milling process, which was initially planned for the week of June 16, has been postponed because the contractor is delayed due to weather affecting their other projects. It is now expected that milling will commence the week of June 23, with paving to occur afterward, depending on the weather.

Water & Sewer Department Pump Station Rehabilitations:

- Den Brook Pump Station Rehabilitation: PSI is currently awaiting the delivery of check valves from the manufacturer before they can be installed. The repairs are anticipated to be finished by the end of July 2025.

- **Dogwood Pump Station:** One of the pumps at this station failed in February 2025. It took 12 weeks for the new pump to be delivered. PSI completed the installation of the new pump and parts on June 5, and the station is now fully operational. This station is also waiting for check valves from the manufacturer, and repairs are projected to be completed by the end of July. A proposal has been received from Dewberry Engineers for the design of upgrades to this pump station, which will cover equipment and site improvements. It is expected that this proposal will be awarded to Dewberry in July, with the design finalized by the end of 2025 and construction scheduled for winter/spring 2026.

Financial Market Update - Phoenix Advisors, LLC, the township's financial advisors, provides a market update several times a year. Of particular note, revised issuance data for April shows the month managed a modest year-over-year gain, as a surge in sales during the latter half offset early-month disruptions caused by tariff-related volatility. The next Federal Reserve Meeting is June 18th. The minutes from the May meeting indicate that the Federal Reserve is unlikely to cut rates in the near future. There are still concerns about potential stagflation, where economic growth slows while prices continue to rise.

F. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

1. Approval of Township Council Regular Meeting Minutes – March 6, March 20, and April 3, 2025.

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from March 6, March 20, and April 3. Councilwoman Thornton seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES:	Councilwoman Carey
	Councilwoman Elbaum (Abstained to the April 3, 2025 mintues)
	Councilman Nisivoccia
	Councilwoman Thornton
	Councilwoman Veech
	Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
	Mayor Hathaway
NAYS:	None

G. COMBINED ACTION RESOLUTIONS

1. R 125-25 Requesting the Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation Per NJSA 40A:4-87 - Local Recreation Improvement Grant (LRIG) - \$84,000.00
2. R 126-25 Appointing Standard Insurance Company to Provide a Fully Insured Long-Term Disability Program for the Period June 1, 2025 - May 31, 2027
3. R 127-25 Authorizing Award of a Professional Services Agreement to Brandstetter Carroll, LLC for the Development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Period of June 10, 2025 Through June 9, 2026 - Not to Exceed \$164,000.00

CERTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Dated: June 10, 2025

As required by N.J.S.A. 40A:4-57, N.J.A.C. 5:30-5.3-5.5, and any other applicable requirement, I, Deborah Bonanno, Director of Finance for the Township of Randolph, have ascertained that funds are available to award a contract in the amount of \$164,000 to Brandstetter Carroll, Inc. for development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan as detailed in the response provided to the township's request for proposal.

Deborah Bonanno
Chief Financial Officer

Budget Accounts: 04-215-56-031-306 \$64,000
 04-215-56-044-300 \$100,000

4. R 128-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption for Block 151, Lot 8, 12 Winding Way, to Walter M. and Elizabeth Kelly - \$2,024.04
5. R 129-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption for Block 45, Lot 22.15, 3 Tamari Court, to Craig O. Barnett and Daphnee Elysee - \$3,191.42
6. R 130-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption for Block 227, Lot 6, 10 Knights Bridge Drive, to Brian and Severine Capo - \$2,253.46
7. R 131-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption for Block 167, Lot 2, 116 West Hanover Avenue, to Daniel Carrion - \$4,043.64
8. R 132-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption to Michael and Jennifer Tavares - \$4,497.24
9. R 133-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption for Block 93, Lot 27, 64 Old Brookside Road, to Joseph J. Orlandi and Robyn M. Vuskalns - \$1,936.40
10. R 134-25 Authorizing Release of Police Detail Escrow
11. R 135-25 Authorizing Tax Collector to Refund Property Taxes Due to Veteran Exemption for Block 27, Lot 17, 23 Berry Lane to Dakota Palmer and Laura R. Cecchetto - \$4,093.63
12. 2. R 136-25 Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriations Per N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 - Clean Communities Grant - \$76,392.91
13. R 137-25 Authorizing Refund of Recreation Program Fee to Chiara Gough - \$480.00
14. R 138-25 Amending Public Health Shared Services Agreement between the Township of Randolph and the Township of Roxbury
15. R 139-25 Liquor License Renewals for 2025 - 2026 Season
16. R 140-25 Authorizing the Cancellation of Capital Improvement Authorizations
17. R 141-25 Authorizing Refund of Incorrect Permit Fee to Tamarack Day Camp - \$400.00
18. R 142-25 Authorizing 2024 LOSAP Benefit to be Paid in 2025 - Volunteer Fire Department and Volunteer Rescue Squad

19. R 143-25 Authorizing Award of a Contract Under the ESCNJ for the Purchase and Delivery of a New Roll-Off Body for DPW Truck #953 Utilizing Contract 23/24-04 Trucks - Class 4-8 - \$63,000.00

CERTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Dated: June 10, 2025

As required by N.J.S.A. 40A:4-57, N.J.A.C. 5:30-5.3-5.5, and any other applicable requirement, I, Deborah Bonanno, Director of Finance for the Township of Randolph, have ascertained that funds are available for the purchase of a new roll-off body for DPW Truck #953 from Cliffside Body Corporation.

Deborah Bonanno

Chief Financial Officer

Budget Accounts: 04-215-56-042 \$64,000

20. R 144-25 Authorizing Award of a Contract Under the ESCNJ for the Purchase and Delivery of a New Cab/Chassis for DPW Truck #953 Utilizing Contract 23/24-04 Trucks - Class 4 - 8 - \$175,000.00

CERTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Dated: June 10, 2025

As required by N.J.S.A. 40A:4-57, N.J.A.C. 5:30-5.3-5.5, and any other applicable requirement, I, Deborah Bonanno, Director of Finance for the Township of Randolph, have ascertained that funds are available for the purchase of a new cab/chassis for DPW Truck #953 from Gabrielli Kenworth of Northern NJ.

Deborah Bonanno

Chief Financial Officer

Budget Accounts: 04-215-56-042-301 \$175,000

21. R 145-25 Authorizing the Rejection and Award of MCCPC Contract #20-B (Sporting Goods) to Various Vendors

22. R 146-25 Authorizing Award of MCCPC Contract #30 (Office Paper Supplies) to Various Vendors

23. R 147-25 Authorizing Award of MCCPC Contract #52 (Fire Alarms, Sprinklers, Standpipe Systems, Fire Pumps) to Various Vendors

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to approve the combined action agenda. Councilwoman Carey seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton (Abstained on Item #18, R 142-25)
Councilwoman Veech

Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler (Abstained on Item #18, R 142-25)
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

H. ORDINANCES: INTRODUCTION

1. Ordinance 15-25 – An Ordinance of the Township of Randolph Appropriating \$14,000 from the General Capital Improvement Fund for the Purchases of Rescue Squad Equipment – Suction Devices

Manager Poff explained that the purpose of this ordinance is to appropriate \$14,000.00 from the General Capital Improvement Fund for the purchase of suction devices for the Randolph Township Rescue Squad.

BE IT RESOLVED, that an Ordinance entitled, “An Ordinance Authoring the Acceptance of Certain Sanitary Sewer Facilities Constructed by or on Behalf of BH Brightview Randolph, LLC and Authorizing the Acceptance of the Bill of Sale” be introduced, read by title by the Township Clerk and passed on first reading.

BE IT RESOLVED, that said Ordinance shall be further considered for final passage at the meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Randolph on the 24th, of July, 2025 at 6 o’clock in the evening, prevailing time, at the Town Hall in said Township, at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said ordinance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk be authorized and directed to advertise said Ordinance in full or by summary with the notice of introduction thereof, in the official designated newspaper according to law.

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to introduce the ordinance. Councilwoman Thornton seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

I. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Seeing and hearing none, the public session was closed.

J. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Veech reported that the Planning Board approved a small subdivision and adopted the fourth-round housing proposal.

Councilwoman Elbaum reported that the Board of Health met on June 9. During the meeting, the committee presented Project Healthy Bones and the Peer-Leader Recognition Awards. These awards are presented to leaders who teach the community about exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle factors. She also shared that the committee presented a Recycling Attendant Recognition. The idea came from Dr. Millman, who noted that the Recycling Center attendants were very helpful.

She reported that Health Officer Courtney Sartain informed the committee that the Health Department's grants have been restored. Additionally, the department held a Chem 23 Profile Screening on May 16; 21 people participated—all of whom were new residents to the town. The committee also discussed green energy, ordinances, food truck inspections, and massage license guidelines. She shared that the township is working with a program called VaxCare, a third party that provides shingles, COVID, and flu vaccines. The town will pay an administrative fee for the administration of the vaccines, and insurance companies will be billed directly.

Councilwoman Carey reported that she attended a RevolutionNJ Committee meeting. She shared that there was some confusion about the focus of the initiative—whether it centered on the Revolutionary War or the complete 250 years of the United States. The committee reviewed potential logos. The theme of the initiative is “Randolph Celebrating America’s 250 Years of Freedom.” The vision statement is still being refined and will be finalized during the committee’s next meeting. She added that Kristina Garlick was chosen as the Committee Chair and Chitra Bhat as Vice Chair. The group is building a calendar of events for the entire year of 2026 to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday. She also reported attending several events, including the Arts in the Park event, the ribbon-cutting of the NJ Center for Cognitive and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, the Greek Festival, a CCM facility opening, and more.

Mayor Hathaway referred to the RevolutionNJ Committee, informing Councilwoman Carey that the Kiwanis expressed interest in having the Army Field Marching Band potentially participate in the 2026 celebrations.

Councilwoman Thornton reported that she attended the New Jersey Homeland Security Active Shooter Presentation hosted by the Randolph Police Department on May 19. The event focused on Randolph houses of worship and included discussion on best practices for emergency response in preparation for special events at these locations. She noted that the Morris County Prosecutor’s Office and Sheriff’s Office were also in attendance. She also attended VFW Post #7333’s Memorial Day Ceremony on May 26, along with other councilmembers. On May 30, she attended the ribbon-cutting for St. Andrew’s Church during the Greek Festival.

On May 31, Councilwoman Thornton attended the Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony. Three Randolph Eagle Scouts from Troops 109 and 901 were honored. She shared that June 6 was her first experience with Say Hi Day; she commented that the event was a wonderful opportunity for township employees to connect.

She reported that the Diversity Work Group met on June 2 to review the 17 recommendations for enhancing diversity and inclusion within the jurisdiction. The work group felt that all the

recommendations were being followed and plans to continue their review, advising the council of any concerns or updates.

On June 3, she participated in a Traffic Advisory Committee meeting. The Randolph Police Department is looking to discuss the area of Sussex Turnpike between West Hanover Avenue and Calais Road with the county. She shared that the library hosted a Snack and Study event for high school students preparing for AP exams; the program was very well received. She concluded her report by sharing that the first of the library's summer concerts would be held at Veterans Community Park on June 23 at 6:30 p.m. The remaining concerts in the series will take place every Monday at the library gazebo.

Councilman Nisivoccia reported that the Trails Advisory Committee reviewed different options for the Shunpike Trail. He noted that there are many wetlands in the area and that several options had been reviewed in the spring. All information has been handed off to Planning & Zoning Administrator Darren Carney to determine the trail's feasibility and segmentation. He shared that committee member Myra Sesko reported that the Trails Facebook page has exceeded 1,500 followers. A new Hike of the Month program will be held during the upcoming warmer months.

He continued by reporting that he attended the Arts in the Park event, the Millbrook Fire Company fundraiser, the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Morris Vocational School and County College of Morris Career Training Center, the Greek Festival, and the Bench Dedication for Cecile Wilder, a longtime volunteer at the Randolph Museum.

He also shared that he completed his annual diversity training and has attended Facility Workgroup meetings; one such meeting involved touring the Carteret Municipal Cultural Arts Center. He reported attending the Volunteer Fair, which included representatives from the Fire Department, the Historical Society of Old Randolph, and Parks and Recreation. He noted that the library was not present. He concluded his report by sharing that he attended the 90th Birthday Celebration for Marilyn Harmons.

Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler reported that he has attended many of the previously mentioned meetings. He noted that the Randolph Rocks 5K was held on May 31.

He also reported that the Wildlife Management Advisory Committee met on May 28. The committee received mark-out information from the state and discussed deer harvest data, noting that harvests have decreased each year—from approximately 471 in the 2014–2015 season to about 131 in the 2024–2025 season.

He referenced the Facility Workgroup's tour of the Carteret Cultural Arts Center and added that the subcommittee also visited the Middletown Cultural Arts Center. He found it interesting how Carteret utilized various funding sources. He shared that the Middletown facility is operated day-to-day by a nonprofit organization, while the town retains ownership of the building. Both buildings are used for multiple purposes, with removable seating to accommodate galas, indoor festivals, car shows, and more. He noted that Carteret is in the midst of significant downtown revitalization.

He concluded his comments by thanking everyone who attended the Tricky Tray Fundraiser for the Millbrook Fire Company.

Mayor Hathaway reported that he attended the New Jersey Conference of Mayors Spring Summit in Atlantic City. He had the opportunity to host a roundtable discussion on communications and local government. Other topics discussed at the summit included affordable housing, environmental issues, stormwater regulations, and more. He thanked Communications Director Robert Rios and Assistant Manager Evan Covello for creating a flyer that outlined the township's communication offerings for residents.

He also attended the Board of Education Liaison meeting, during which the board provided updates on their upcoming construction schedule. He noted that the board encountered a few roadblocks related to solar panel installations. Over the summer, Police Chief Will Harzula was present at the school to discuss bus security cameras and physical education access to equipment as needed. The board reiterated that its relationship with the Department of Public Works—regarding their facility and transportation garage—remains very positive. He suggested to Superintendent Fano that the township could bring a running list of committees without student liaisons to future quarterly meetings.

He shared that he spent time delivering welcome packages to new residents. He concluded his report by thanking members of the council for joining him in authoring a letter to the Jewish community in light of the recent attacks in Boulder, Colorado, during a Run for Their Lives event. He noted that the organization behind the event is a nonpartisan, nonpolitical entity focused on raising humanitarian awareness for Israeli hostages. He thanked Township Manager Poff and Chief Harzula for their efforts in communicating the township's commitment to maintaining the safety of both the Jewish community and the entire Randolph community.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975 (N.J.S.A. 10:4-12) permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting under certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Randolph, in the County of Morris, and in the State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from the remaining portion of this meeting.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
 - A. Litigation: Jersey City/JCMUA for Jersey City MUA vs. Rockaway Valley Sewerage Authority
 - B. Attorney-Client Privilege: State Licensed Housing
3. As nearly as can now be ascertained, the matter or matters to be discussed at this time will be disclosed to the public at such time and under such circumstances as are prescribed by law.

4. At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Council will reconvene in public session for the purpose of taking formal action on matters discussed in closed session or on any matter as permitted by law.

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to move into Executive Session at 5:50 p.m. Councilwoman Carey seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler made a motion to close the Executive Session and reopen the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Councilman Nisivoccia seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to authorize the Township Attorney to proceed with the aligned conversation during the Executive Session. Councilwoman Carey seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES: Councilwoman Carey
Councilwoman Elbaum
Councilman Nisivoccia
Councilwoman Thornton
Councilwoman Veech
Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
Mayor Hathaway
NAYS: None

L. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Jeanne Stifelman of Heather Lane shared that she was the Lead for the New Jersey Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Safety. Moms Demand Action is the largest organization advocating for gun violence prevention in the country, with more than 11 million members

nationwide and chapters in every state. She shared that the organization's purpose is to decrease gun violence and increase public safety across our nation. The organization consists of gun violence survivors, including victims and witnesses, change-makers, and advocates who come together in partnership to work toward a future that is free from gun violence. This past weekend, they wore orange and gathered in communities across the country to honor those who have been impacted by gun violence.

She shared that 2024 was another deadly year of gun violence in America, but because of the strong laws in New Jersey, the work of Community Violence Intervention organizations, responsible firearms owners who securely store their guns, and effective law enforcement, gun violence deaths have dropped 16% and were at a record low for the second year in a row. She noted that this was an improvement, but there were more guns than ever before on the streets, in addition to gun violence prevention efforts being defunded by the Federal Government. She referred to the Supreme Court in *Bruen v. NYSRPA* (2022), which undermined NJ's conceal and carry laws, and, as a direct result, a spike in Conceal and Carry Permits from 1,500 permits two years ago to more than 70,000 today.

She explained that in light of the recent attacks from Washington, Moms Demand Action NJ has issued a red alert. She shared statistics about firearms being a leading cause of death for children and teenagers in the U.S. She referred to a statistic that cited that 4.6 million children in the U.S. live in homes with guns that are both loaded and unsecured. Every month, an average of 76 women in the U.S. are shot and killed by an intimate partner, and more are shot and wounded. She also added that access to guns triples the risk of suicide. She referred to programs and events that have happened locally to promote gun safety, such as the ARRIVE Program. She stated that Moms Demand Action would love to work with the township to pass a secure storage firearm ordinance.

Jonathan Torres of 22 Prince Henry Drive thanked the council for considering a secure storage ordinance. He noted that secure gun storage is a core aspect of responsible gun ownership. Securely storing firearms has many benefits. It protects children and adults by preventing unintentional shootings and gun suicides. It can also prevent gun violence at schools by reducing school-aged children's access to guns. He stated that guns can end up stolen and find their way into fueling the illegal market, often ending up in the hands of criminals who are prohibited from having them. He cited a study that found that a household that locked up both firearms and ammunition was associated with a 78% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens compared to those that locked neither. He cited another study that estimated that half of the households with children that have at least one unlocked gun switched to locking all their guns. One-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented, saving an estimated 251 lives per year, and access to guns triples the risk of death by suicide and doubles the risk of death by homicide.

As a physician, he emphasized the impact of guns in situations of suicide. He noted that guns are the leading cause of death for children and teens; 4.6 million children live in households with firearms, and 41% of those have been reported to have their firearms within easy reach. He asked the council to consider drafting a resolution to help ensure that safe storage is mandated for gun owners. He continued to cite additional statistics about accidental shootings among minors resulting in injuries or deaths. He noted that 60% of school-age shooters were current or former students, and research suggests that school-age shooters predominantly obtain their guns from family members or friends. He shared that the Secret Service had undertaken a study to examine 40 years of incidents and found that three-quarters of school shooters acquired firearms from the home of a close relative.

Another Secret Service study, examining incidents between 2008 to 2017, found that in nearly half of the shootings, the firearm was easily accessible and was not stored securely. He encouraged the council to consider supporting their request to draft a safe storage ordinance.

M. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Nisivoccia made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m. Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler seconded the motion, and the following roll call vote was taken:

AYES:	Councilwoman Carey
	Councilwoman Elbaum
	Councilman Nisivoccia
	Councilwoman Thornton
	Councilwoman Veech
	Deputy Mayor Forstenhausler
	Mayor Hathaway
NAYS:	None