

Minutes of the 1932nd Regular Meeting of December 3, 2025

CALLED TO ORDER:

I hereby call the Borough of Wood-Ridge Council meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: led by Councilperson Azzolini

ROLL CALL:

Mayor:	Paul Sarlo – present
Council President:	Michele Mabel – present
Council:	Ezio Altamura – present
	Dominick Azzolini – present
	Philip Romero – present
	Michael Donato – present
	Richard Wall – present
Borough Attorney:	Paul Barbire – present by telephone
Borough Engineer:	Brian Intindola – excused
Borough Clerk:	Gina Affuso – present
Borough Administrator:	Chris Eilert – present

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT:

This meeting is being held in accordance with Public Law 1975 Chapter 231, the Open Public Meetings Act, also known as the “Sunshine Law”. The public meeting notice stating the date, time and place of this meeting was posted on the town bulletin board and the town website and was forwarded to the Record and the Star Ledger.

CEREMONIAL PRESENTATIONS:

None

ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING:

None

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING AND FINAL PASSAGE:

BOND ORDINANCE 2025-18

BOND ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES, INCLUDING DOYLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, THE WOOD-RIDGE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, THE WOOD-RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL AND THE WOOD-RIDGE ATHLETIC COMPLEX, IN AND BY THE BOROUGH OF WOOD-RIDGE, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY, APPROPRIATING \$17,000,000 THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$7,500,000 BONDS OR NOTES OF THE BOROUGH TO FINANCE PART OF THE COST THEREOF.

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, in the County of Bergen, New Jersey (the "Borough") designated certain parcels of real property, including the property referenced herein, as an area in need of redevelopment pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.* (the "Redevelopment Law"); and

WHEREAS, by Ordinance No. 2019-4, the Mayor and Council of the Borough adopted and approved the 2019 Wesmont Station Redevelopment Plan (the "Redevelopment Plan"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Redevelopment Law, the Borough has elected to act as redevelopment entity (the "Redevelopment Entity") to implement the Redevelopment Plan and carry out the redevelopment projects described therein, within the Redevelopment Area; and

WHEREAS, Section 37 of the Redevelopment Law provides that the Borough may incur indebtedness, borrow, appropriate and expend money and issue its negotiable bonds or other obligations for the purpose of aiding any redevelopment entity with respect to any redevelopment project which is located within its jurisdiction, including, those instances where, as here, the governing body of a municipality directly exercises the powers of the redevelopment entity under the Redevelopment Law; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to exercise this authority to authorize bonds to provide for improvements to building and properties, including Doyle Elementary School, the Wood-Ridge Intermediate School, the Wood-Ridge High School and the Wood-Ridge Athletic Complex, in furtherance of the Redevelopment Plan; and

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF WOOD-RIDGE, IN THE COUNTY OF BERGEN, NEW JERSEY (not less than two-thirds of all members thereof affirmatively concurring) AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The recitals to this bond ordinance are hereby incorporated as if set forth in full herein.

Section 2. The improvements described in Section 4(a) of this bond ordinance are hereby authorized to be undertaken by the Borough as general improvements. For the improvements or purposes described in Section 4(a), there is hereby appropriated the sum of \$17,000,000, including a \$9,500,000 State of New Jersey FY2026 Appropriations Act grant issued through the State Department of Education (the "State Grant"), awarded to the Wood-Ridge Board of Education (the "School District") and contributed to the Borough pursuant to the terms of the Shared Services Agreements dated June 21, 2023 and September 1, 2024, respectively (together the "Shared Services Agreements") by and between the Borough and the School District. Said State Grant shall be used in furtherance of the purposes described in Subsection "i" of Section 4(a) only. No down payment is required on the amount of the appropriation not funded by the State Grant pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-37(c)* as this bond ordinance authorizes obligations for the purpose of aiding the Redevelopment Entity with respect to the hereinafter defined Redevelopment Project within the Borough.

Section 3. In order to finance the cost of the improvements or purposes not covered by application of the State Grant, negotiable bonds are hereby authorized to be issued in the principal amount of \$7,500,000 pursuant to the Redevelopment Law. In anticipation of the issuance of the bonds, negotiable bond anticipation notes are hereby authorized to be issued pursuant to and within the limitations prescribed by the Redevelopment Law.

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Section 4. (a) The improvements hereby authorized and the purposes for the financing of which the bonds are to be issued are as follows (collectively, and as more fully set forth in the Redevelopment Plan, the “Redevelopment Project”):

- i. Improvements and renovation of the Doyle Elementary School building and property, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto and further including all related costs and expenditures incidental thereto.
- ii. Improvements and renovations to the Wood-Ridge Intermediate School building and property, which is owned by the Borough, and the Wood-Ridge High School building and property, which is owned by the School District, pursuant to the Shared Service Agreements, including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto and further including all related costs and expenditures incidental thereto.
- iii. Improvements to the Wood-Ridge Athletic Complex, which is owned by the Borough and located in the Redevelopment Area, which shall include the construction of athletic fields, pickleball courts, parking lots, and other public amenities including all work and materials necessary therefor and incidental thereto and further including all related costs and expenditures incidental thereto.

(b) The estimated maximum amount of bonds or bond anticipation notes to be issued for the improvements or purposes is as stated in Section 3 hereof.

(c) The estimated cost of the improvements or purposes is equal to the amount of the appropriation herein made therefor.

Section 5. All bond anticipation notes issued hereunder shall mature at such times as may be determined by the chief financial officer; provided that no bond anticipation note shall mature later than one year from its date, unless such bond anticipation notes are permitted to mature at such later date in accordance with applicable law. The bond anticipation notes shall bear interest at such rate or rates and be in such form as may be determined by the chief financial officer. The chief financial officer shall determine all matters in connection with bond anticipation notes issued pursuant to this bond ordinance, and the chief financial officer's signature upon the bond anticipation notes shall be conclusive evidence as to all such determinations. All bond anticipation notes issued hereunder may be renewed from time to time subject to the provisions of the Redevelopment Law. The chief financial officer is hereby authorized to sell part or all of the bond anticipation notes from time to time at public or private sale and to deliver them to the purchasers thereof upon receipt of payment of the purchase price plus accrued interest from their dates to the date of delivery thereof. The chief financial officer is directed to report in writing to the governing body at the meeting next succeeding the date when any sale or delivery of the bond anticipation notes pursuant to this bond ordinance is made. Such report must include the amount, the description, the interest rate and the maturity schedule of the bond anticipation notes sold, the price obtained and the name of the purchaser.

Section 6. The Borough hereby certifies that it has adopted a capital budget or a temporary capital budget, as applicable. The capital or temporary capital budget of the Borough is hereby amended to conform with the provisions of this bond ordinance to the extent of any inconsistency herewith. To the extent that the purposes authorized herein are inconsistent with the adopted capital or temporary capital budget, a revised capital or temporary capital budget has been filed with the Division of Local Government Services.

Section 7. The following additional matters are hereby determined, declared, recited and stated:

(a) The improvements or purposes described in Section 4(a) of this bond ordinance are not current expenses. They are improvements or purposes that the Borough may lawfully undertake as improvements described in the Redevelopment Plan, and no part of the cost thereof has been or shall be specially assessed on property specially benefitted thereby.

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(b) Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-37(c), the obligations authorized herein shall mature in annual installments commencing not more than two and ending not more than thirty years from their date of issuance.

(c) The Supplemental Debt Statement required by the Local Bond Law has been duly prepared and filed in the office of the Clerk, and a complete executed duplicate thereof has been filed in the office of the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs of the State of New Jersey. Such statement shows that the gross debt of the Borough as defined in the Local Bond Law is increased by the authorization of the bonds and notes provided in this bond ordinance by \$7,500,000, and the obligations authorized herein will be within all debt limitations prescribed by that Law.

(d) An aggregate amount not exceeding \$500,000 for items of expense listed in and permitted under N.J.S.A. 40A:2-20 is included in the estimated cost indicated herein for the purposes or improvements.

(e) The obligations of the Borough authorized by this bond ordinance shall bear interest at a maximum rate of not to exceed six per centum (6.00%) per annum.

Section 8. Any grant moneys received for the purposes described in Section 4(a) hereof shall be applied either to direct payment of the cost of the improvements or, if other than the State Grant referred to in Section 1 hereof, to payment of the obligations issued pursuant to this bond ordinance. The amount of obligations authorized but not issued hereunder shall be reduced to the extent that such funds are so used.

Section 9. The Borough hereby declares the intent of the Borough to issue the bonds or bond anticipation notes in the amount authorized in Section 3 of this bond ordinance and to use proceeds to pay or reimburse expenditures for the costs of the purposes or improvements described in Section 4(a) of this bond ordinance. This Section 9 is a declaration of intent within the meaning and for purposes of Treasury Regulations §1.150-2 or any successor provisions of federal income tax law.

Section 10. The chief financial officer of the Borough is hereby authorized to prepare and to update from time to time as necessary a financial disclosure document to be distributed in connection with the sale of obligations of the Borough and to execute such disclosure document on behalf of the Borough. The chief financial officer is further authorized to enter into the appropriate undertaking to provide secondary market disclosure on behalf of the Borough pursuant to Rule 15c2-12 of the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "Rule") for the benefit of holders and beneficial owners of obligations of the Borough and to amend such undertaking from time to time in connection with any change in law, or interpretation thereof, provided such undertaking is and continues to be, in the opinion of a nationally recognized bond counsel, consistent with the requirements of the Rule. In the event that the Borough fails to comply with its undertaking, the Borough shall not be liable for any monetary damages, and the remedy shall be limited to specific performance of the undertaking.

Section 11. The full faith and credit of the Borough are hereby pledged to the punctual payment of the principal of and the interest on the obligations authorized by this bond ordinance. The obligations shall be direct, unlimited obligations of the Borough, and the Borough shall be obligated to levy *ad valorem* taxes upon all the taxable property within the Borough for the payment of the obligations and the interest thereon without limitation of rate or amount.

Section 12. This bond ordinance shall take effect 20 days after the first publication thereof after final adoption.

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Advertisement of the above Ordinance has been made according to law and a copy of the Ordinance was posted on the bulletin board.

Mayor Sarlo called for a Hearing of Citizens on Ordinance #2025-18

Mayor Sarlo closed Hearing of Citizens on Ordinance #2025-18

Motion: Councilperson Azzolini, seconded by Donato moved to the adoption of Ordinance #2025-18

Roll Call: Mabel yes, Altamura yes, Azzolini yes, Romero yes, Donato yes, Wall yes

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-19

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 513 SCHEDULE VIII, ENTITLED STOP INTERSECTIONS BY THE ADDITION THERETO OF INTERSECTIONS.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, County of Bergen, New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1.

A. § 513-50 Schedule VIII entitled Stop Intersections is hereby amended as follows:

(1) Add the following intersections to the list of One-Way Stops:

- a. Center Street at Madison Street (westbound on Center Street)
- b. Truman Drive at Eisenhower Lane
- c. Veterans Drive at Eisenhower Lane

(2) Add the following intersections to the list of Two-Way Stops:

- a. Roosevelt Drive at the private Alleyways approximately 500 feet north of the intersection of Roosevelt Drive at Marshall Lane
- b. Roosevelt Drive at the private Alleyways approximately 1,200 feet north of the intersection of Roosevelt Drive at Marshall Lane

(3) Add the following intersections to the list of Three-Way Stops:

- a. Truman Drive and Wilson Lane
- b. West Wood-Ridge Drive and Eisenhower Lane

SECTION 2. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. If any part, sections, provisions, or the total of any of the abovementioned publications are held to be invalid or unenforceable by any court, the findings or judgments of which court are applicable in the State of New Jersey, that the balance and remainder of such publication shall remain in full force and effect as an Ordinance of the Borough of Wood-Ridge.

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SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption and publication according to law.

Advertisement of the above Ordinance has been made according to law and a copy of the Ordinance was posted on the bulletin board.

Mayor Sarlo called for a Hearing of Citizens on Ordinance #2025-19

Patrick DiRoma of 115 Truman Drive asked what stops signs were being added. Administrator Eilert explained One-Way Stops will be added to the westbound side of Center Street at Madison Street, Truman Drive at Eisenhower Lane, and Veterans Drive at Eisenhower Lane. Two-Way Stops at Roosevelt Drive north of the intersection of Roosevelt Drive at Marshall Lane, Roosevelt Drive north of the intersection of Roosevelt Drive at Marshall Lane. Three-Way Stops at Truman Drive and Wilson Lane, and West Wood-Ridge Drive and Eisenhower Lane.

Mayor Sarlo closed Hearing of Citizens on Ordinance #2025-19

Motion: Councilperson Altamura, seconded by Mabel moved to the adoption of Ordinance #2025-19

Discussion: Administrator Eilert explained the location of the new stop signs listed in the ordinance above.

Roll Call: Mabel yes, Altamura yes, Azzolini yes, Romero yes, Donato yes, Wall yes

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING:

None

PETITIONS:

None

COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications and correspondence received are identified on this evening's agenda has been distributed to all Council for appropriate action.

- a. Thank you letter from Assumption Food Pantry for the generous collection of food by the Borough.

REPORTS OF GOVERNING BODY:

Chairs of Council Committees and Council Liaisons to Boards, Commissions, Committees & Constituencies

Council President Mabel:

Board of Education - Nothing to report at this time

Senior Citizens - the Mayor's Holiday Pasta Dinner will be held on Friday, December 5, from 4:30 - 7pm

Public Information / Events - PTA Santa Breakfast is Saturday, December 6th at the Fiesta from 9 – noon.

Assumption Church - Knights of Columbus Santa Breakfast is Sunday, December 14th. The annual tree lighting was a huge success. Thank you to Cathy Calabro, the DPW, police department, and fire department for all their hard work. And a special thank you to Mike Donato for organizing and the rest of the council for helping out.

Councilperson Altamura:

Thank you to Mike and Michele for a great job on the tree lighting. Thank you to DPW for the beautiful decorations throughout town.

Councilperson Azzolini:

No report

Councilperson Romero:

During the month of November 2025, the Wood-Ridge Fire Department responded to 28 alarms of fire and 5 mutual aid alarms for a total of 345 hours of service. The Department also expended the following additional hours of service: Department training: 35 hours, Equipment Maintenance: 125 hours, Misc. / Special Duties: 216 hours, Subtotal: 376 hours, Fire Calls: 345 hours, Total: 721 hours.

Councilperson Donato:

No report

Councilperson Wall:

No report

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

Administrator Eilert: No report

Borough Clerk Affuso: No report

Attorney Barbire: progress

Engineer Neglia: on file

REPORTS OF DEPARTMENTS: If any, on file in clerk's office

FIRST HEARING OF CITIZENS:

Mayor Sarlo declared the Hearing of Citizens to be open.

Patrick DiRoma of 115 Truman Drive asked what happened to the signs in the center of the streets at Wesmont. Administrator Eilert stated some were removed due to the wind and DPW will be replacing. Others may have been removed by teens and we are looking into the matter.

With no other citizens wishing to speak, the hearing of citizens was closed.

RESOLUTIONS VOTED SEPARATELY:

**RESOLUTION NO.: 135-2025
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS 2025**

WHEREAS, there has been presented to the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, the attached list of invoices requesting payment of the work, labor, services and materials supplied to the Borough; and

WHEREAS, said list and certification specify the exact line item in the Budget or Ordinance to be charged therewith; and

WHEREAS, said list and certification has been reviewed and approved by the Members of the Borough Council Finance Committee as certified by their signatures on this resolution; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that payment of said invoices is hereby approved and authorized and the Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized and directed to draw warrants in payment thereof, same to be signed by the proper officials of the Borough, who are hereby authorized to sign same; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that certification of the Chief Financial Officer of the availability of funds therefore shall be attached to the original copy of the Resolution and both are kept in the files of the Municipal Clerk.

Councilperson Altamura requested a separate roll call for Check No. 90127, 90132 and 90247 on Payment of Bills.

Motion: Councilperson Azzolini, seconded by Romero moved to the adoption of Payment of Bills with abstentions.

Roll Call: Mabel yes, Altamura abstain, Azzolini yes, Romero yes, Donato yes, Wall yes

CONSENT AGENDA:

All matters listed below are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by Council, that particular item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the November 12, 2025 Meeting.

RESOLUTIONS: Adoption of the following

**RESOLUTION NO.: 135-2025
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS 2025**

WHEREAS, there has been presented to the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, the attached list of invoices requesting payment of the work, labor, services and materials supplied to the Borough; and

WHEREAS, said list and certification specify the exact line item in the Budget or Ordinance to be charged therewith; and

WHEREAS, said list and certification has been reviewed and approved by the Members of the Borough Council Finance Committee as certified by their signatures on this resolution; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that payment of said invoices is hereby approved and authorized and the Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized and directed to draw warrants in payment thereof, same to be signed by the proper officials of the Borough, who are hereby authorized to sign same; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that certification of the Chief Financial Officer of the availability of funds therefore shall be attached to the original copy of the Resolution and both are kept in the files of the Municipal Clerk.

**RESOLUTION NO.: 136-2025
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH ADMINISTRATOR TO FILE A NEW JERSEY
POLICE AND FIREMEN’S RETIREMENT SYSTEM ORDINARY DISABILITY RETIREMENT
APPLICATION**

WHEREAS, a Wood-Ridge Police Officer with NJ Police and Firemen’s Retirement System Pension Number 03-116639 (hereinafter “Police Officer”) employed by the Borough of Wood-Ridge, has been on sick leave since March 8, 2024 which exceeds the twelve (12) month period permitted for non-work-related sick leave time pursuant to Article XXI of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (hereinafter, “the Agreement”) between the Borough of Wood-Ridge and PBA Local 313; and

WHEREAS, Article XXI of the Agreement directs that police officers who cannot return to work due to sickness, injury, or illness are required to file for disability retirement, as provided by for the New Jersey Police and Firemen’s Retirement System (hereinafter “PFRS”); and

WHEREAS, the Agreement provides that under the above recited circumstances the Borough may initiate an employer filing of a PFRS Involuntary Ordinary Disability Retirement Application for a police officer;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Mayor and Council is of the opinion that said Police Officer is totally and permanently disabled and therefore is incapable of performing the job duties of a police officer; and

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2. The Mayor and Council hereby directs the Borough Administrator to initiate an employer filing of a NJ PFRS Involuntary Ordinary Disability Retirement Application with the New Jersey Police and Firemen’s Retirement System for the Police Officer, and to take all other necessary actions as may be required, pursuant to this Resolution and the terms of the Agreement.

This resolution will take effect immediately, according to law.

APPLICATIONS:

- a. Saddle Brook Spirit Leaders for an On-Premise 50/50 and Tricky Tray on February 4, 2026 at the Fiesta.
- b. Wood-Ridge Touchdown Club to benefit the Wood-Ridge High School Class of 2026 Project Graduation for an off-premise 50/50 to be called on January 1, 2026 at The Ridge House.
- c. Rutherford Irish American Association for an On-Premise 50/50 on January 3, 2026 at the Fiesta.

All applications have been approved by the Wood-Ridge Police Department.

APPOINTMENTS:

None

HIRINGS:

- a. Nicola “Nico” Scarimbolo, Ray Greenough and Vincent Casella, currently DPW seasonal laborers, to the position of full-time Laborer 1 with salary per contract effective 1/1/26.

Motion: Councilperson Azzolini, seconded by Wall moved to the adoption of all matters on the above **CONSENT AGENDA.**

Roll Call: Mabel yes, Altamura yes, Azzolini yes, Romero yes, Donato yes, Wall yes

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

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NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Sarlo stated the next council meeting will be on December 17th at which we will be swearing in our 3 new police officers who are graduating from the Police Academy. The Reorganization Meeting will be on January 3rd at 4:00 pm. DPW will continue to work through December to clean all the leaves.

Councilperson Azzolini reminded residents and council of the WRIS Band and Choir Club Winter Concert on Thursday, December 11th at 6:30 PM in the WR JR/SR high school auditorium.

SECOND HEARING OF CITIZENS:

Mayor Sarlo declared the Hearing of Citizens to be open. With no citizens wishing to speak, the hearing of citizens was closed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Since there was no further business to come before the Council, Councilperson Altamura, seconded by Councilperson Wall moved for adjournment. By unanimous vote of the members of the Council present, the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wood-Ridge held on December 3, 2025 was duly adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Affuso, RMC
Borough Clerk