

**PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES**

The Public Meeting of the Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers and called to order at 7:30PM. Adequate notification was published in the official newspaper of the Borough of Montvale. Council President Cudequest led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and roll call was taken

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to The Bergen Record informing the public of the time and place according to the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

Also Present: Mayor Mike Ghassali; Borough Attorney, Dave Lafferty; Borough Engineer, Nick Chelius; Borough Administrator, Joe Voytus; and Municipal Clerk, Fran Scordo

ROLL CALL:

Councilmember Arendacs
Council President Cudequest
Councilmember Koelling

Councilmember Lane - absent
Councilmember Roche - via telephone
Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang - absent

ORDINANCES:

None

MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC:

Agenda Items Only

Motion to open meeting to the public by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs – all ayes

No Public Comment

Motion to close meeting to the public by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs – all ayes

MEETING CLOSED TO PUBLIC:

Agenda Items Only

MINUTES:

August 25, 2026

A motion to accept the minutes by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs - all ayes

CLOSED/EXECUTIVE MINUTES:

July 28, 2026

A motion to accept the closed session minutes by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Roche - all ayes

August 25, 2026

A motion to accept the closed session minutes by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Roche - all ayes

RESOLUTIONS: NON-CONSENT

None

RESOLUTIONS: (CONSENT AGENDA*)

*All items listed on a consent agenda are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Borough Council and will be approved by a motion, seconded and a roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Council member(s) so request it, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

161-2026 A Resolution Authorizing a Tax Court Settlement Filed By Toll NJ I LLC for the Property Identified as Block 1903, Lot 7.01 on the Official Tax Map of the Borough of Montvale

WHEREAS, the aforesaid Tax Appeal involves the properties located at Cranberry Lane, Bittersweet Terrace, Driftway Lane and Cottonwood Drive, and is identified as Block 1903, Lot 7.01 on the tax assessment map of the Borough (hereinafter the "subject property") under Docket No. 009886-2022 and Docket No. 009882-2022; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body has been advised as to the merits of the subject Tax Appeal by the Borough Tax Assessor and the Borough Appraiser; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, that the aforesaid Tax Appeal settlement is hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that with respect to same, the Borough Assessor, Borough Attorney and/or any other appropriate Borough official are hereby authorized to perform any act necessary to effectuate the purposes set forth in this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to refund Toll NJ I LLC c/o Zipp & Tannenbaum, LLC, 280 Raritan Center Parkway, Edison, NJ 08837 in the amount of \$ 115,272.15

162-2026 RE: Authorize Execution of Agreement with Valley View @ Montvale Condominium Association Municipal Service Agreement

WHEREAS, the Condo Services Act provides for a phase in schedule for municipal reimbursement payment at the municipal cost for certain enumerated municipal services or the providing of such services by the municipality in lieu of such reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, an agreement has been negotiated between the Borough of Montvale and Valley View @ Montvale Condominium Association to satisfy the obligation of the Borough as provided by the Condo Service Act, which agreement is attached and made part of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, this agreement shall remain in effect for a five-year period to commence on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2029; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale hereby authorize the execution of the attached Agreement on behalf of the municipality by the appropriate municipal officials.

Introduced by: Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Roche - a roll call was taken – all ayes

ADD-ON RESOLUTIONS:**163-2026 Appointment Part Time Floater/Administrative Assistant to Planning Board - Abbe Kooper**

WHEREAS, the Borough of Montvale's Administration Department is in need of hiring a part-time floater/administrative assistant to the Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, Abbe Kooper has met the qualifications for this position and agrees to the terms and conditions of part-time employment, and has completed a satisfactory background investigation; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Montvale, County of Bergen, State of New Jersey the above-named individual is hereby appointed as a part-time employee, effective September 14, 2026

Introduced by: Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs – all ayes --- Joe Voytus, BA, explained, this new hire replaces the employee who resigned, she will be sitting up front on the administration side

BILLS: Administrator read the Bill Report

Motion to pay bills by Councilmember Roche; seconded by Council President Cudequest - all ayes

REPORT OF REVENUE: Administrator read the Report of Revenue – August

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT CUDEQUEST:

Library

Tammy King has resigned from the board. Thanked Tammy for her years of service to the Library Board; On Tuesday, September 15th the Koots Band will be performing. This is the last summer concert of the season. September is National Get a library card month. There are incentives to give out to all patrons getting their first library card. The library is also collecting seeds this fall for a new seed Library; patrons can pick up envelopes to donate seeds for flowers, fruits and veggies at the circulation desk.

Seniors

Welcome back BBQ on Thursday, September 17 at Huff Park; Pizza and Bingo will resume on Fridays in October

Fire Dept

52 fire calls; 2 Mutual Aid Calls; 2 drills; 5 work details; 1 meeting – to date the Fire Department has responded to 270 calls

COUNCILMEMBER ROCHE:

Recreation

Day in the Park is on September 26 from 3:00 till 8:00. Fireworks will start usually about 8:00 or so. Day at the Farm will be October 17th from 12:00 till 3:00. Also, the Halloween Carnival is coming up on October 30th and the Christmas tree lighting is scheduled for December 4th

The Planning Board, Environmental Commission, Recreation Department and Darlene Green From Colliers Engineering are receiving an award from the New Jersey Planning Officials for their work on the Montvale Open Space and Recreation Plan. Award ceremony is schedule at the beginning of October

COUNCILMEMBER ARENDACS:**Engineering**

Monthly report included in original minutes;

DPW

Preparing all the ball fields for the Fall and Winter season; Because of the recent wet weather, the grass has been slower to dry, thus putting the department slightly behind schedule, but they are working to catch up. The equipment is being tuned up and prepared for the Fall season. The DPW is also clearing out the recycling center to make room for the additional debris; Street Sweeping is continuing throughout the town. The DPW is also preparing for the 911 ceremony and for Day in the Park

Police

Monthly report included in original minutes;

Joe Voytus read the school report on behalf of Councilmember Russo-Vogelsang**Opening of School**

Our school year is off to an excellent start, and the energy across both buildings has been wonderful to see. Our new STEAM lab at Memorial Elementary School is officially open, giving our youngest learners a dedicated space to explore, build, and problem solve in hands on ways. In addition, our new main hallway and 4th grade hallway and classrooms were completely renovated over the summer, and the results are truly impressive. These updated spaces are bright, welcoming, and designed to support learning for years to come. We are grateful to everyone who worked hard over the summer months to make these improvements possible in time for the new school year.

FMS Back to School Night

This Thursday, September 10, is FMS Back to School Night. It will be a great evening for parents to participate in a fast-paced preview of their child's daily schedule. By physically walking their child's schedule and meeting their teachers, parents gain a clearer picture of the daily routine, the academic expectations for the year, and the social emotional supports in place. This is always a favorite event for our families, and we look forward to seeing everyone there.

Memorial Back to School Night

Next Wednesday, September 16, is Memorial Back to School Night. It will be a great evening for parents to learn more about what their child's experience will be like at Memorial. Families will have the opportunity to connect with teachers, tour classrooms, and get a real feel for the year ahead. We hope to see a great turnout as we welcome our Memorial families into the building.

New Assistant Principal at Fieldstone Middle School

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Michele McNerney, who was approved to serve as Fieldstone's next Assistant Principal at the August 31st Board of Education meeting. Ms. McNerney comes to Fieldstone with over 15 years of classroom experience in both Special Education and Language Arts, mostly in the Jersey City Schools. Her background and experience will be a wonderful addition to our Fieldstone community, and we are excited for her to get started. She will begin on Monday, September 14, 2026, and we know our staff and students will give her a warm welcome.

9/11

Two of our 2nd grade students will have the honor of participating in the Borough's 9/11 ceremony this Friday evening. We are proud of them for representing Montvale in this meaningful tribute.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Tomorrow is the 911 ceremony, 25 years later, we still remember the ones we lost, the families, the heroes. I ask everyone to pause tomorrow. Remember the courage, the sacrifice, the unity that define our nation. We have a program set up for tomorrow and we're having several speakers. We're having second graders talk about what all this means. And we have a very special police officer from Montvale who was there on that day. 7pm Memorial Drive. A new company moving into Montvale Stacks Street Coffee, 75,000 sq feet.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Nick Chelius

Councilmember Arendacs reported on it

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: Dave Lafferty

The Fairness Hearing is scheduled on November 18th before Judge Corriston at the Bergen County Courthouse, it's an open to the public. There's also a mechanism to send written comments in. Anyone can go and listen and participate.

Councilmember Roche mentioned about an article in the Pascack Press regarding the Planning Board meeting on October 6th; Joe, BA, explained there's not an application for the data center; that's just the area in need of redevelopment study that Darlene prepared. It is simply determining whether the KPMG property, the 25 Philips property and 1 Glenview property qualifies under the statutory criteria as an area in need of redevelopment. It has nothing to do with a data center application or anything of that sort. It's just the redevelopment designation hearing.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Joe Voytus

Looking into LED light conversion at borough hall and at the senior center this is through O & R at no cost to the borough; the guardrail installation for Magnolia is scheduled to start on Monday, September 14, the County has requested if the start time can be at 4am that day because they don't want to remove them in advance of putting in the guardrail and have that time period where there's no protection there. Councilmembers agreed to have them start at 4am. Had a meeting with representatives from the Hills-Valley Coalition to discuss their mission; they would like to come to speak at a council meeting in November; the Environmental Commission will be receiving an award for the Montvale Community Garden. Receive an email from a resident regarding a DPW worker Randy, and his willingness to help unload grass clippings into the container;

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

- GoGov Community Notifications & Alerts Mobile App

Joe explained that this is an app that residents can download for notifications as well as a quick access to borough information and online forms and to make payments.

COMMUNICATION CORRESPONDENCE:

None

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

HEARING OF CITIZENS WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

Upon recognition by the Mayor, the person shall proceed to the floor and give his/her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the records. Unless further time is granted by the Council, he/she shall limit his/her statement to five (5) minutes. Statements shall be addressed to the Council as a body and not to any member thereof. No person, other than the person having the floor, shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, without recognition by the Mayor.

*Motion to open meeting to the public by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Roche
- all ayes*

No Public Comment

Motion to close meeting to the public by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Arendacs - all ayes

MEETING CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC:

ADJOURNMENT:

*Motion to adjourn Public Meeting by Council President Cudequest; seconded by Councilmember Roche
- all ayes*

Meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm

Regular Workshop Meeting of the Mayor & Council to be held at 7:30pm on September 29, 2026

Respectfully submitted, Frances Scordo, Municipal Clerk