

MINUTES  
RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
JANUARY 2, 2025

Mayor Chegwidden called the meeting to order and read the Open Public Meeting Statement as follows:

"This is the Annual Re-Organization Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Wharton which was advertised in the print media as required by law. A copy of the annual meeting schedule is posted in the Municipal Building."

Swearing in of Council Members

Mayor Chegwidden announced that the Morris County Clerk's Office has determined that at the last General Election, Nicole Wickenheisser and Thomas Yeager were duly elected to the positions of Council Members for the Borough of Wharton for a term of three years.

Mayor Chegwidden called both Council Members to the platform to be sworn in. Mayor Chegwidden administered the Oaths of Office. Congratulations were offered by all in attendance.

Mayor Chegwidden invited the Council Members to address the public.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She thanks everyone for their support and promises to always do her best. Thank you to the Borough's staff and volunteers and she hopes that 2025 is a quieter year than 2024.

Councilman Yeager: Thank you to the residents for their continued faith in us.

Mayor Chegwidden thanked County Commissioner Shaw for attending and invited him to address the meeting. Commissioner Shaw congratulated everyone who was elected and appointed and is looking forward to working with them again.

Mayor Chegwidden noted that he received calls from Senator Bucco and Assemblyman Barranco and received a letter from Assemblywoman Dunn that he would like added to the record under correspondence.

Roll Call

Mayor Chegwidden to request Roll Call:

Councilman Vincent Binkoski  
Councilwoman Ana Jones  
Councilman Robert Norton  
Councilwoman Paola Vasquez  
Councilwoman Nicole Wickenheisser  
Councilman Thomas Yeager

Flag Salute

Mayor Chegwidden led those present in the Salute to the American Flag.

Election of Council President

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and seconded by Councilman Binkoski to elect Councilman Norton as Council President for the year 2025.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 0	ABSTAIN: 0
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**MOTION CARRIED**

Fire Department Appointments

Wharton Borough Fire Chief, Douglas Ploth, for the year 2025 - term to expire 12/31/25.

Wharton Borough Fire Department Deputy Chief, Michael Marks Jr., for the year 2025- term to expire 12/31/25.

Wharton Borough Fire Department Battalion Chief, Christopher Elio, for the year 2025- term to expire 12/31/25.

Wharton Borough Fire Department Captains:

- Louis Ploth
- Tyler Muzzillo

Wharton Borough Fire Department Lieutenant:

- Caesar Rios

All one-year terms to expire 12/31/25.

A motion to confirm all Fire Department appointments was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6</b>	<b>NAY: 0</b>	<b>ABSENT: 0</b>	<b>ABSTAIN: 0</b>
<b>MOTION CARRIED</b>			

Mayor Chegvidden and Councilman Yeager administered the Oaths of Office for the Fire Department. Congratulations were offered by all in attendance.

Consent Agenda

- Resolutions:
- R-01-25: Meeting Schedule
  - R-02-25: Temporary Budget
  - R-03-25: Temporary Capital Budget
  - R-04-25: Cash Management Plan
  - R-05-25: Professionals Resolution- Competitive Contracting
  - R-06-25: Professionals Resolution- Discretionary
  - R-07-25: Authorizing Agreement for Risk Management Services
  - R-08-25: Approve Agreement Health Benefits Producer
  - R-09-25: Fixing Interest Rate on Delinquent Taxes for 2025
  - R-10-25: Authorizing the Tax Collector and Utility Collector to Cancel Balances under \$10.00
  - R-11-25: Authorizing Returned Check Fee
  - R-12-25: Designating Public Agency Compliance Officer
  - R-13-25: Authorizing Signatures and Approvals of Purchase Orders if Administrator/CFO is Not Available
  - R-14-25: Setting Hourly Fee for Independent Attorneys
  - R-15-25: Liability Search Officer for 2025
  - R-16-25: Tax Search Officer for 2025
  - R-17-25: Authorizing Certain Payments Outside of Scheduled Council Meetings
  - R-18-25: Authorizing Re-Establishment of Petty Cash Funds
  - R-19-25: Designating Official Newspapers for 2025
  - R-20-25: Authorizing Signatures on Borough Checks
  - R-21-25: Establish Bid Threshold
  - R-22-25: Authorizing Grant Applications if Due Date is Outside of Scheduled Council Meetings

- R-23-25: Appointment of 2025 Local Emergency Planning Committee
- R-24-25: Tort Claims Required Notice
- R-25-25: Volunteer Appreciation Program for 2025
- R-26-25: Authorizing Participation in the Morris County Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-27-25: Authorizing Participation in the State Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-28-25: Authorizing Participation in the Somerset County Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-29-25: Authorizing Participation in the Bergen County Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-30-25: Authorizing Participation in the Cranford Police Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-31-25: Authorize Participation in the Sourcewell Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-32-25: Authorizing Participation in the Educational Services Commission of NJ Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-33-25: Authorize Participation in OMNIA Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-34-25: Authorize Participation in NJ Edge Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-35-25: Authorize Participation in Keystone Purchasing Network
- R-36-25: Authorize Participation in the TIPS Co-Operative Purchasing Program
- R-37-25: Recomending the Appointment of Judge, Public Defender and Prosecutor
- R-38-25: Appoint Records Custodians
- R-39-25: Approve Third Amendment to Interlocal Services Agreement with the Township of Mine Hill to Provide Local Police Coverage
- R-40-25: Authorize Shared Service Agreement Borough of Chester-Solid Waste Curbside Pickup
- R-41-25: Interlocal Services Agreement Mt. Olive- Health

Mayor's Appointments that Require Council Consent

Alternate to Morris County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Representative- Paola Vasquez, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Alternate Police Chaplain- James Gottshall, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Alternate School Crossing Guards- Sue Adams, Alberto Calderon-Farfan, Christina Dorr, and James McCormick one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

Assistant Administrator- Gabrielle Evangelista, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Assistant Director of Public Works- Thomas Quillinan, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Assistant to Construction Official- Desinez Ruffo, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Board of Health Members- Doreen Thompson, Nancy Leone, and Michael Ross, three-year terms to expire 12/31/27

Board of Health Secretary- Desinez Ruffo, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Board of Health Secretary for Licensing- Cheryl Muzzillo, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Certifying Payroll Officers- Diana Spina and Joseph Kovalcik Jr. one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

CFO- Joseph Kovalcik Jr.- tenure

Clean Communities Coordinator- Scott Hutchins, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Community Affairs Coordinator- Cheryl Muzzillo, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Deputy Borough Clerks- Cheryl Muzzillo and Desinez Ruffo, one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

Deputy Emergency Management Coordinators- David Young and Leon Stickle, one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

Deputy Fire Official- John Webber, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Deputy Housing and Zoning Official- Patrick Lavery, one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

Deputy Tax Collector- Sandi Critchlaw, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Deputy Water/Sewer Collector- Diana Spina, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Director of Public Works- Scott Hutchins, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Fire Official- Richard Cloughley, one-year term to expire, 12/31/25

Matrons- Melanie Hvid-Cole, Jen O'Malley-Dorr, Vicky Santana-Stickle, one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

Municipal Alliance Coordinator- David Young, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Municipal Housing Liaison for COAH- Patrick Lavery, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Personnel Administrator- Gabrielle Evangelista, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Planning Board Secretary- Desinez Ruffo, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Police Chaplain- Father Lemmuel A. Camacho, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Qualified Purchasing Agent- Katelin Lorito, four-year term to expire 12/31/28

Recreation Director- Cheryl Muzzillo, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Recycling Coordinator- Scott Hutchins, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

School Crossing Guards- Sue Adams, Alberto Calderon-Farfan Kathleena Jackson, Jackie Kelly, Deborah Kline, Maureen Macalalag, Stephanie Mertz, Clifford Rollins, and Robert Thrower, one-year terms to expire 12/31/25

Water/Sewer Clerk- Sandi Critchlaw, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Water/Sewer Operator- Nicholas DeRosa, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

Zoning/Housing Enforcement Official/Road Opening Official – Leon Stickle, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

*Committee Appointments*

Alternate Members to Finance Committee - #1 - Councilwoman Wickenheisser and #2 –Councilman Norton

Community Relations- (includes Recreation Committee, Celebration Public Events, Regionalization Committee- Shared Services, Senior Citizen Association) – Councilwoman Wickenheisser

Environmental Commission- Consists of Mayor and Council Members

**Finance-** (includes Insurance, Budget, Personnel, CFO, Street Lighting, Tax Assessor, Tax Collector, Community Development) – Councilman Binkoski

**Finance Committee-** Councilman Binkoski (Chair), Councilwoman Vasquez, and Councilman Yeager

**Health/Welfare-** (includes Board of Health, Public Assistance, Library) – Councilwoman Jones

**Personnel Committee-** Councilman Binkoski (Chair), Councilwoman Vasquez and Councilman Yeager

**Public Affairs-** (includes Building Inspector, Housing Inspector, Planning Board, Licenses, Zoning Officer, School Sub-Committee) – Councilwoman Vasquez

**Public Safety-** (includes Police Department, Fire Department, First Aid Squad, Municipal Court, Emergency Management, Elections) - Councilman Yeager

**Public Works-** (includes Parks, Building/Grounds, Sanitation, Maintenance Shop, Engineering, Streets and Roads, Water and Sewer) – Councilman Norton

A motion was made by Council President Norton and was and seconded by Councilman Yeager to approve all of the items listed on the Consent Agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6      NAY: 0      ABSENT: 0      ABSTAIN:0

MOTION CARRIED

Mayor's Appointments

**Alternate Members to the Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee-** Vince Binkoski/Joseph Kovalcik, Jr., one-year term to expire 12/31/25

**Mayor Representative to the Morris County Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee-** Paola Vasquez, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

**Planning Board Alternate-** Lawrence Biehler, two-year term to expire 12/31/26

**Planning Board Class 3 Member-** Councilwoman Vasquez, one-year term to expire 12/31/25

**Trustee of Library-** Debra Demattio, five-year term to expire 12/31/29

Ordinance

Councilman Yeager introduced O-01-25, “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 3, Article III, Section 13 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey,” on first reading by title only.

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to adopt O-01-25 on first reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6      NAY: 0      ABSENT: 0      ABSTAIN: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Mayor Chegwidden set the date of January 20, 2025 for second and final reading.

Correspondence

- Letter from Assemblywoman Dunn

Council Remarks:

Council President Binkoski: Happy New Year to everyone. He is looking forward to a good year.

Councilwoman Jones: Happy New Year to everyone. She thinks 2025 will be a good year.

Councilman Norton: He thanks the rest of the Council for voting him Council President. This will be a great year.

Councilwoman Vasquez: Congratulations to Councilman Norton for being Council President and to Councilwoman Wickenheisser and Councilman Yeager on their re-elections. She wants to thank all of the people who volunteer on the different boards in town, they make a lot of effort and she appreciates it.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: Happy New Year to everyone. Congratulations to everyone who was sworn in tonight.

Councilman Yeager: Congratulations to Council President Norton and to everyone who was appointed for the Fire Department.

Mayor Chegwidden's Remarks

Mayor Chegwidden outlined some of the Borough's accomplishments from 2024:

- Road Projects
  - Robert Street (Grant of \$271,200)
  - Various curb, storm basin, sidewalk, and crosswalk repairs and refurbishment
- Rehab of Water Tank
- Completion of Morris Canal Lock 2 East Project
- Replacement of Library Windows and Roof using CDBG grant money
- Negotiated extension of Mine Hill Police Contract
- Implemented new sanitation pick up system with tippers and Borough provided garbage carts

Among others, and with all of that we are still debt free.

He then discussed some things that are on the horizon for 2025:

- Road Projects:
  - Washington Street (Grant of \$648K)
- Design work will begin on Baker Phase I and II (Grant Funded)
- New Dog Park
- Development of Fields at Orchard Mine and extension of Betty Poyer Park
- Begin overhaul of Columbia Street Park (Grant of \$76,000)
- Work on addressing parking needs within the Borough
- We have a new shared service where we are providing Chester Borough with sanitation pick up

He congratulates Councilman Norton for being Council President and Councilwoman Wickenheisser and Councilman Yeager on their re-elections. This is really a great team. He thanks Mr. Hirniak and Mr. Kovalcik for all of their hard work on the Borough's behalf. He thanks all of the volunteers in town and there are a lot of them. He wishes everyone a Happy New Year and hopefully there are no sinkholes this year.

Public Portion

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

No one wishing to be heard, Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilman Yeager.

January 2, 2025

ATTEST:

**BOROUGH OF WHARTON**

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Gabrielle Evangelista,  
Borough Clerk

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**WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,  
MAYOR**