

REGULAR MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Mayor Chegwidden called the meeting to order.

Mayor Chegwidden read the Open Public Meeting Statement.

Roll Call

Mayor Chegwidden to request Roll Call:

Council President Binkoski - Present
Councilwoman Gonzalez - Present
Councilwoman Hobbs - Present
Councilwoman Jones - Present
Councilwoman Wickenheisser - Present
Councilman Yeager - Present

Flag Salute

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

Open to the Public

In accordance with Local Ordinance O-18-03, “Persons making public comment at the first public portion shall be limited to five (5) minutes. During the second public portion the presiding officer shall have the discretion to terminate any repetitive, irrelevant or excessive public comment in the interest of permitting all members of the public time to speak on any governmental issue and completing the public business within a reasonable period of time.”

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

Gabriel Gonzalez, 32 Fern Ave: He submitted a written statement to be entered into the meeting record, which was read to the Governing Body by Lindsey Crean of 113 High St. In his statement, Mr. Gonzalez addressed an incident involving a council member's behavior during a recent Board of Education meeting, inquired about the capacity in which council members attend other public body meetings, raised questions regarding behavioral expectations and standards for the Governing Body, and offered to share an audio recording of the incident.

Councilwoman Hobbs: In response, she stated that while she represents the Governing Body at Board of Education meetings, she also attends as a resident and parent, wearing multiple hats during public sessions.

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

Resolution

Councilman Yeager introduced R-142-26, “Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of an Acting Police Chief.”

Councilwoman Gonzalez commented she was unaware of a vacancy for Police Chief. Mayor Chegwidden explained that there would be a vacancy and appointing an acting Chief is standard procedure to prepare for the upcoming vacancy. He recommended that she address pre-meeting questions to fellow Governing Body members or the Business Administrator prior to public meetings to be better prepared.

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and seconded by Council President Binkoski to adopt R-142-26.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 4 NAY: 2 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

Yeas: Binkoski, Jones, Wickenheisser, Yeager Nays: Gonzalez, Hobbs

Consent Agenda

The following items are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Mayor and Council and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member or citizen so requests, in which case, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in a normal sequence on the agenda.

Approval of Bills: Approve all bills referred to the Finance Committee			
Approval of Minutes: 9/14/26			
R-143-26: Establishing Change Fund Policies & Procedures			
R-144-26: Cancel Taxes- Pillar Wharton Inc. Block 1605 Lot 4.02			
A motion was made by Council President Binkoski and seconded by Councilwoman Jones to approve all items listed on the Consent Agenda.			
ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0			

Council Reports

Council President Binkoski: He commended a successful effort involving the Police Department, DPW, JCP&L, Port Oram Apartments management, and local residents to rescue a kitten trapped in a conduit pipe, noting the pipe was subsequently capped and the kitten adopted. In administrative matters, he met with the CFO to review municipal budget preparations, conferred with DPW leadership on active Borough projects, and consulted with the Housing Official to confirm code compliance and establish proactive communication regarding neighborhood housing concerns. He also noted that discussions with the Fire Official highlighted new uncompensated state mandates and equipment requirements from Trenton that will impact the upcoming budget.

Councilwoman Gonzalez: She reported that public works staff completed mandatory stormwater training, passed an environmental inspection, provided lighting for four football games, assisted with converting Church Street and Second Street to one-way traffic, and made yard waste bags available at the new Eileen Court recycling location ahead of autumn leaf collection. The department also participated in a pre-design meeting with NJDOT for the Morris Canal Towpath restoration, while the Water Department continued borough-wide meter and valve replacements and gave notice of scheduled hydrant flushing on October 2nd.

Councilwoman Hobbs: She reported that the Board of Education held its Back-to-School picnic and noted a public request to provide meeting agendas in both English and Spanish. She shared a Sewer Authority update regarding litigation with Jersey City, and reminded the public that the Master Plan survey closes on September 30 ahead of the October 13th Planning Board meeting. She inquired about recovery efforts at Luna Restaurant and the status of the demolished home at 8 Fern Ave. She also questioned the purpose of the road striping and no-parking signage on Second and Church Streets following the one-way conversion.

Chief Young responded that Luna Restaurant remains pending an architectural engineer's site assessment, while the demolished site at 8 Fern Ave has been secured and rendered safe as local and state officials continue working with the homeowner under an extended deadline.

Additionally, officials clarified that the recent street striping was implemented to reinforce posted "No Parking" signage.

Councilwoman Jones: She reported on recent attendance at the Morris County League of Municipalities and Library Board meetings, highlighting the Friends of the Library's successful Canal Day accessory sale and a summer reading program that drew 162 participants. Upcoming library events include a Mount Olive Health Department flu vaccine clinic for Wharton residents on September 30th and a Hispanic Heritage Celebration on October 15th. She also clarified non-resident library card options (\$60 annually for local collection access), announced that an upcoming website revamp will restore an inline language translator, and noted for the public that Mount Olive provides public health services to the Borough through a shared services agreement.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She reported a quiet September and announced that planning is underway for the upcoming Halloween event in October.

Councilman Yeager: He attended the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting, where he spoke with Picatinny Arsenal's commander regarding ongoing regional support, and offered congratulations to Chief Hamilton on his appointment as Acting Police Chief.

Mayor Chegwidden's Report: He reported addressing a resident concern regarding a fence along Fern Avenue by requesting aesthetic painting from the owner, and offered congratulations to Acting Chief Hamilton on his official appointment ahead of Chief Young's departure.

Open to the Public

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

Jayne Murphy Morris, 27 Columbia Street: She expressed her personal and professional gratitude for Mayor Chegwidden's hard work and service to the Borough of Wharton and Morris County.

Colleen Pascale, 4 Sunset Drive: She addressed the Governing Body regarding Councilwoman Hobbs' conduct at a recent Board of Education meeting, the need for clear clarification of roles when officials attend external public meetings, and errors in the Councilwoman's liaison report concerning bilingual agenda requests.

Councilwoman Hobbs responded that Ms. Pascale had arrived late to the meeting and noted that the resident who made the suggestion was currently present in the room.

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

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Council President Binkoski and seconded by Councilman Yeager. The motion was approved via voice vote.

September 28, 2026

BOROUGH OF WHARTON

ATTEST:

Cheryl Muzzillo,
Borough Clerk

WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,
MAYOR