

**TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM  
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING  
MARCH 3, 2026  
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 6:30 P.M.  
REGULAR SESSION – 7:30 P.M.**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER** –Mayor Rubenstein called the meeting to order.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT**

This meeting is called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Both adequate and electronic notice of the meeting has been provided, specifying the time and place. In addition, a copy of this notice is available to the public and is on file in the office of the Municipal Clerk, posted on the main door, the bulletin board of the Municipal Building, on the Township website at: [https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town\\_hall/township\\_council](https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/township_council), and has been forwarded to those persons requesting notice.

**ROLL CALL OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL** –Councilwoman Franco, here; Councilman Gallagher, here; Councilman Proctor, here; Mayor Rubenstein, here. Also present was Township Manager Joseph Sabatini, Township Attorney Tom Collins and Township Clerk, Cynthia Church

**RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor, to go into executive session and adopt the below resolution.

**RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act, P. L. 1975, Chapter 231 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

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

- A. Attorney Client Privilege Communication
  - General
  - Gotham Communications

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Byram, that the public shall be excluded from discussion of the following matters:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Minutes will be kept on file in the Municipal Clerk’s office, and once the matter involving the confidentiality of the above no longer requires that confidentiality, then the minutes shall be made public.

**BYRAM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL**

Certification: I certify that the Byram Township Council adopted the above resolution on March 3, 2026.

Cynthia Church, Municipal Clerk

	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion	x			
2nd			x	
Yes	x	x	x	x
No				
Abstain				
Absent				

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION** - Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to return to open session at 7:30 p.m. All members were in favor. Motion Carried.

**FLAG SALUTE**

**CHANGE IN NEW JERSEY LEGAL NOTICE PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

Please be advised that effective March 1, 2026, New Jersey law changes the way legal notices are published by public entities and applicants for development and approvals.

Under this new law, legal notices that were previously published in printed newspapers will now be published on the official website of the Township of Byram. This change is intended to increase public access, transparency, and reduce publication costs.

**What This Means for the Public:**

1. Legal notices will be available online at no cost
2. Notices will be posted on the official website of the Township of Byram
3. Notices will remain accessible for the legally required time period and will be archived for future reference

4. During the transition period in 2026, notices directing the public to the website will also appear in online news publications

**Where to Find Legal Notices:**

Beginning March 1, 2026, all legal notices may be found at:

👉 <https://www.byramtwp.org> . In addition, the State of New Jersey will maintain a centralized online directory linking to all participating public entity legal notice pages.

For assistance accessing legal notices or for questions regarding this change, please contact:

**Cynthia Church, Byram Township Clerk**

**Email: [CChurch@byramtwp.org](mailto:CChurch@byramtwp.org)**

This notice is provided in accordance with New Jersey law to inform the public of changes to legal notice publication requirements.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to approve the agenda with addition of three discussion items.**

	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion	x			
2nd		x		
Yes	x	x	x	x
No				
Abstain				
Absent				

**Mayor Rubenstein stated the following:** *Tonight, it is our duty to fill a seat that became vacant under very sad circumstances. Harvey Roseff served this Township with conviction and dedication. He cared deeply about Byram and its future, and he remained engaged and committed to his principles until the very end.*

*Following the announcement of the vacancy, the Township received several letters of interest from residents willing to serve. Each of the individuals who came forward was thoughtful, qualified, and clearly committed to our community. We are very fortunate to live in a town where so many capable residents are willing to step forward and serve when called upon. On behalf of the Council, I want to sincerely thank all of them for their interest and their willingness to contribute to Byram Township.*

*After careful consideration and discussion, the Council has determined that Mr. Louis Esposito is well suited to serve in this role at this time.*

*It is important that we ensure the continuity of government, and it is our responsibility to appoint a qualified resident to serve until the voters have the opportunity to fill the remainder of the term at the next general election.*

*Mr. Esposito, thank you for your willingness to step forward and serve the residents of Byram Township. Public service is not always easy, but it is important. We appreciate your commitment to this community.*

● **RESOLUTION NO. 065-2026 – Resolution Appointing Louis Esposito to Fill a Vacancy on the Byram Township Council**

	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion	x			
2nd		x		
Yes	x	x	x	x
No				
Abstain				
Absent				

**Mayor Rubenstein stated the following** *For the record, this vacancy was created by the passing of Councilman Harvey Roseff. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:16-3, a vacancy occurs upon the death of a member of the governing body. Because the vacancy occurred prior to September 1 of the next-to-last year of the term, N.J.S.A. 40A:16-5(b) requires that the vacancy be filled at the next general election held not less than sixty days after the occurrence of the vacancy. The governing body is authorized under that same statute to make a temporary appointment until that election occurs and a successor is elected and sworn in to serve the remainder of the unexpired term, which in this case runs through December 31, 2029. Accordingly, the appointment before us tonight is a temporary appointment that will expire on December 31, 2026, or upon the swearing in of a duly elected successor following the November 2026 general election, whichever occurs first.*

● **SWEARING IN OF COUNCILMAN LOU ESPOSITO – Municipal Clerk Cynthia Church swore in Lou Esposito with his wife Cathy holding the bible.**

● **ROLL CALL**

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			

2nd			x		
Yes	x	x	x	x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent					

- **APPOINTMENT AND SWEARING IN OF NEW FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBER** – Anthony Bouyet  
Mayor Rubenstein swore in Anthony Bouyet with his wife holding the bible.

- **2026 BUDGET INTRODUCTION / APPROVAL**

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd			x		
Yes	x	x	x	x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent					

**2026 Budget Information:**

[https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town\\_hall/office\\_article/2026\\_municipal\\_budget\\_information](https://www.byramtwp.org/index.php/town_hall/office_article/2026_municipal_budget_information)

**Budget Message:**

<https://www.byramtwp.org/useruploads/files/02202026%20Municipal%20Budget%20Message%202026.pdf>

**Mr. Sabatini read aloud the following:**

*I would like to start by directing everyone to the Township's Website and under the 2026 Municipal Budget Information you will find all the documentation and details supporting the 2026 Budget Plan. Located under this link you will find my detailed 2026 Municipal Budget Message.*

*Before I start I would like to thank all my department heads for their hard work to hold the line on departmental expenses. Secondly, I would like to offer a special thank you to the Township's CFO, Ashleigh Frueholz. Her work has helped deliver a sound budget plan for 2026.*

*Tonight the Mayor and Council will be asked to approve the budget. Adoption of the budget is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7.*

*Through the adoption of the budget the Mayor & Council are establishing the municipal policy for 2026 and beyond. They must insure the adopted budget adequately satisfies the needs of the community and serves the best interests of the Township*

*The 2026 municipal budget including the Capital Improvement Program and Public and Private Programs Offset by Revenues totals \$14,226,781.36.*

*Every year, the budget planning process confronts new challenges, affecting both the appropriations and revenue sides. These issues require careful consideration to ensure fiscal responsibility and effective allocation of resources.*

*The most significant pressure on this year's budget is the rising cost of employee and retiree health insurance. Byram Township participates in the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP), which has instituted notable premium increase of 36.2% for medical and prescription coverage in 2026..*

*It was decided that property taxes will be utilized to cover the \$628,673 increase in health benefits, which accounts for 93% of the property tax increase.*

*The staff have demonstrated exceptional diligence in preparing their budgets, successfully controlling departmental operating expenses. Overall departmental operating budgets are rising by \$41,086, that represents only a 0.71% increase of the budget.*

*Municipal Operations and the Capital Improvement Program are supported by a variety of revenues. These sources include current property taxes, miscellaneous revenues generated by municipal operations, and fund balance. 2026:*

*This budget plan continues to anticipate an aggressive amount of interest income at \$500,000. In 2025, we collected \$612,537 which was \$112,537 more than anticipated and was a main contributor to increased amount of fund balance. In comparison, the amount collected in 2024 was \$801,868.*

*With decreasing reserve balances and lower interest rates it is advised to reduce dependency on interest income, as declining interest income may necessitate tax increases or expenditure reductions to achieve balanced future budgets.*

The total amount of Fund Balance committed to the 2026 budget is \$2,235,000.

- o \$1,885,000: Support Operations
- o \$350,000: Support One-time expenses

In the 2026 budget, there is a \$350,000 increase in fund balance to support one-time expenses which includes \$28,000 to Group Insurance to cover cost of health benefits consultant and \$322,000 to increase the Capital Improvement Fund.

This increased use of fund balance needs to be assessed annually for sustainability in future budget cycles.

As in recent years, the budget plan continues to shift funds among line items to boost spending on capital improvements.

This budget plan has property taxes totaling \$10,154,023.50 which is a 7.14% or \$676,602.50 increase of the tax levy.

The Township's ratable base remains limited, with 87% of assessments attributed to residential properties. No new residential subdivisions are expected, as most communities are fully built out. Commercial and industrial properties make up only 8.86% of the rate base, and most opportunities for growth in this area are through redevelopment.

In summary, the proposed budget plan sufficiently addresses the community's needs and serves the Township's best interests. This responsible budget reflects the hard work and dedication of all department heads and staff in managing departmental operating expenses.

Mayor Rubenstein reiterated that almost the entire increase is contributed to Health Insurance increases.

**TOWNSHIP MANAGER, MAYOR, AND COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Township Manager** – Affordable housing public hearing is on tonight's agenda. It will be submitted prior to March 14<sup>th</sup>. There are four MOU's on the agenda tonight to provide the opportunity to the employees to save money through a High-Deductible Plan with a different card. 2025 Annal report has been posted to the township website. Adoption of the budget will be on April 7<sup>th</sup>

**Mayor Rubenstein** – attended a mayor meeting regarding the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States. Byram will need to have a conversation as to how they would like to celebrate that.

**Councilman Esposito** – the Historical Society received the same letter reagding the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States.

**Councilwoman Franco** – the 2026 Polar Plunge will be held March 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am at Lake Lackawanna Beach. This year's theme – St Patrick's Day. The recreation spring brochure is out, and people are signing up. Yesterday we had a great trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show. 1,227 have signed up for a Community Pass account, this is an additional 54 families from the last reported count at the council meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Councilman Gallagher** – The next Byram Board of Education meeting is scheduled on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. Thanked DPW for their work during the last couple of storms.

**Councilman Proctor** – Next Planning Board meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup> has been cancelled. Attended his first Environmental Commission meeting.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION I**

Motion by Councilwoman Franco second by Councilman Proctor to open to the public. All members were in favor.

No comments.

Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to close to the public. All members were in favor.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

February 17, 2026, Regular & Closed Session Meeting Minutes - Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to approve minutes.

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes		x	x	x	x
No					
Abstain	x				
Absent					

**RESOLUTION NO 078-2026 - RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM APPROVING THE 2026 AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND SPENDING PLAN TO BE UPDATED FROM THE PRIOR SPENDING PLAN AND TO BE PREPARED BY THE TOWNSHIP PLANNER, DANIEL BLOCH.**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Township of Byram approve the updated 2026 Affordable Housing Trust Fund Spending Plan to be finalized and prepared by the Township Planner Daniel Bloch.

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes	x	x	x	x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent					

**CONSENT AGENDA** – All are considered to be routine by the Members of the Township Council and will be enacted on by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a citizen or Council member requests in which event the item may be removed from the general order of business and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda. Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- A. Resolution No. 064-2026 – Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of a 2026 Radon Awareness Program (RAP) Grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection in the Amount up to \$1,350.00
- B. Resolution No. 066-2026 – Resolution Granting a License for 2026 to Raimo of Stanhope, Inc. to Operate Facility Pursuant to Chapter 156 of the Byram Township Code
- C. Resolution No. 067-2026 – Approval of Quarry License for Year 2026 for Tilcon New Jersey, a Division of Tilcon New York, Inc.
- D. Resolution No. 068-2026 Township of Byram, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey Appointing EB Employee Solutions, LLC, DBA the Difference Card to Provide HRA Services for the Township of Byram
- E. Resolution No. 069-2026 – Memorandum of Agreement - PBA Local 406
- F. Resolution No. 070-2026 - Memorandum of Agreement – DPW OPEIU Local 32
- G. Resolution No. 071-2026 - Memorandum of Agreement – Clerical OPEIU Local 32
- H. Resolution No. 072-2026 – Authorization to Execute Change Order No. 1 for Proposed Improvements to Roseville Road – Line Striping – Net Increase \$156.06
- I. Resolution No. 073-2026 - Authorization to Execute Change Order No. 1 for Proposed Improvements to Roseville Road – Milling and Paving – Net Decrease \$11,645.44
- J. Resolution No. 074-2026 – Self Examination of Budget Resolution
- K. Resolution No. 075-2026 – Resolution Authorizing 100% Disabled Veteran Exempt Status to Owner of Block 304 Lot 2181 Refund of Taxes Paid for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026
- L. Resolution No. 076-2026 – Resolution Authorizing 100% Disabled Veteran Exempt Status to Owner of Block 337.03 Lot 5 Refund of Taxes Paid for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026
- M. Resolution No. 077-2026 – Resolution Authorizing 100% Disabled Veteran Exempt Status to Owner of Block 404 Lot 35 Refund of Taxes Paid for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes	x	x	x	x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent					

**BILL LIST – March 3, 2026 – Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to approve the bill list.**

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes	x	x	x	x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent					

Councilman Gallagher dropped off from the Zoom Meeting call.

• **ORDINANCE – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading / Public Hearing**

**ORDINANCE NO. 003-2026** - An Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the Township of Byram Amending Chapter 215 Entitled “ Site Plan and Subdivision Review” to Delete Article XIII Entitled “Development Fees” and Chapter 240 Entitled “Zoning” of the Code of the Township of Byram to Delete Sections 240-81 Entitled “Affordable Housing” and Section 240-82 Entitled “Mandatory Setaside of Units” and Related Sections 240-83 Through 92 and to Replace them in their Entirety with a New Section 240-81 Entitled “AFFORDABLE HOUSING”

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes	x	x		x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent			x		

BE IT RESOLVED that Ordinance No. 003-2026 is passed on final reading and that a notice of final passage be published on the township website according to the law.

**ORDINANCE – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading / Introduction**

- An Ordinance of the Township of Byram, County of Sussex, and State of New Jersey to Amend the Township Code by Repealing Chapter 3, “Administration of Government,” Article VII, “Municipal Court,” And Article VIII, “Municipal Court Prosecutor” And Adding New Chapter 3, “Administration of Government,” Article VII, “Joint Municipal Court”

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes	x	x		x	x
No					
Abstain					
Absent			x		

BE IT RESOLVED, that said Ordinance shall be further considered for final passage at the meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Byram on March 17, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building, 10 Mansfield Drive, Byram Township, at which time and place all persons interested shall be given an opportunity to be heard.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Funding of Football Field Lights – Mayor Rubenstein will prepare a memo.
- Paving of Route 206 – Mayor Rubenstein will reach out to DOT.
- Forst Lakes Drive at Route 206 – Mayor Rubenstein will research to see where this was left off by Councilman Roseff.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION II**


Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to open to the public.

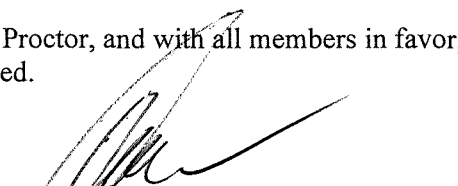
Don Bogardus asked about the gas line installation on Route 206 – another two weeks if everything goes well.

Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to close to the public.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On the motion of Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor, and with all members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. All members were in favor. Motion carried.

  
Cynthia Church, RMC  
Township Clerk

  
Alexander Rubenstein, Mayor