

**TOWNSHIP OF BYRAM
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 11, 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, and has been forwarded to those persons requesting notice.

ROLL CALL OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL –Councilman Esposito, here; 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 Gallagher, 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
 - CO Field 8
- B. Shared Services – Code Enforcement
- C. Anticipated Litigation

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 August 11, 2026.

Cynthia Church, Municipal Clerk

	Councilman Esposito	Councilwoman Franco	Councilman Gallagher	Councilman Proctor	Mayor Rubenstein
Motion		x			
2nd				x	
Yes	x	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 7:38 p.m. All members were in favor. Motion Carried.

FLAG SALUTE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor to approve the agenda for August 11th.

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

PRESENTATION – CO JOHNSON FIELD 8, ANNOUNCERS BOOTH & LIGHTING – Cory Stoner

Field 8 Drainage Issue

Field 8 at Carl O. Johnson Park continues to experience drainage problems. While the recent construction project to renovate this field included the installation of field drainage, the drainage system lies under a layer of topsoil that is prohibiting water from infiltrating into the system. This topsoil is the original field topsoil that was modified in the recent project by mixing sand into the layer before regrading and sodding. After recent tests of the in-place soil, the soil was found to have a low permeability rating and consisted of large quantities of fine and silty sand. This topsoil after grading and construction activities has become compacted and hard and allows little to no water to travel through the topsoil and into the field drainage system. The sod that lies on top of the topsoil acts as a sponge and water is only leaving the field by evaporation or bleeding out the lower section of the field toward the existing detention basin.

After reviewing field conditions after rain events, conducting soil testing, and consulting with some experts in the field of athletic facility construction, Mr. Stoner identified two options that he believes should be presented to the Township Mayor and Council for consideration. These options are summarized below:

Option 1: Full Topsoil and Turf Reconstruction

This option involves the removal and replacement of the field's existing topsoil and turf structure. It would require removing all previously installed sod, stripping of all existing topsoil and removal of the topsoil from the park property. New topsoil that meets proper material standards would then be imported, graded, and prepared for new sod. New sod would then be installed over the newly graded field.

This is an expensive option and would significantly impact much of the work that was completed during the recent construction project to improve this field. It is my estimate that the cost for this work would be between **\$200,000 and \$250,000**.

Option 2: Soil Rehabilitation

A second option is to rehabilitate the existing soil structure rather than fully reconstruct the existing field. This approach could take several forms, but after discussions with field specialists, Mr. Stoner believes the strongest option is one that aerates and loosens the soil while introducing supplemental material to help break up the current soil structure.

Specifically, this would involve deep-tine aeration of the field or using mechanical cores that penetrate the soil to break up the compacted layer that exists today. The field would then be top-dressed with an amendment material which would enter much of the cores to improve the soil profile. This top-dressing could consist of additional sand but a better option in my opinion would be to use a product known as Turface. This material would fill the deep tine cores and would keep air and water channels open, absorb standing water, serve to improve the soil's structure and composition, and offer benefits that would beyond what sand alone can provide.

One challenge that would need to be addressed prior to deep tining and topdressing, is the current thickness of the turf grass thatch layer. The existing turf grass has a thick thatch layer that will prevent the aeration cores and amendment material from reaching into the soil below. To address this, Mr Stoner recommends major dethatching of the field to remove the excess dead grass material. Following dethatching, the field would be top-dressed, aerated, and overseeded. The field would then be allowed to recover and regrow without a thick thatch layer inhibiting air and sunlight to reach the base of the grass blades and allowing the soil layer to dry out properly.

The estimated cost associated with this option would be between \$45,000 and \$65,000. A breakdown of the tasks involved with this option and the estimated costs is below:

- Turf Dethatching: \$10,000 to \$20,000
- Deep Tining: \$3,000 to \$5,000
- Turface Material: \$20,000 to \$25,000
- Topdressing: \$10,000 to \$12,000
- Overseed: \$2,000 to \$3,000

Mr. Stoner noted that while the first option is a more one and done option that would remove the poor topsoil and replace with new topsoil material with proper permeable components, this second option would take time for the field to fully improve. The improvements proposed above would be the first activity to improve this field and noticeable results should be experience with just this first activity. The process of deep tining and topdressing, however, will likely need to occur one or twice a year for the next few years. Depending on how the initial process improves the field, future topdressing may be able to be performed with sand or compost that will cost considerably less than the recommended initial Turface material topdressing. Again, this option is not a one and done option and will take time for the field structure to improve.

The Governing Body will have a resolution at the next meeting to authorize Option 2, under a coop.

Resolution No. 158 – 2026 - Resolution for Member Participation in ta Cooperative Pricing System

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

CO Johnson Football Field Dimensions & Expansion:

Cory Stoner, Township Engineer, reviewed the dimensions of the existing football field at Carl O. Johnson Park to determine what sports could be accommodated on the athletic field area if the field was enlarged without impacting on the other sports facilities. The existing field within the fenced area is 113 yards long x 53 yards wide. The maximum field size that could be obtained without negatively impacting the adjacent little league fields would be 135 yards long x 60 yards wide. The increase in field size is not significantly larger than what exists today but will make the field more useful for some sports. A table reviewing various sports being considered for this field is included below:

Sport	Required Dimensions (Length x Width)	Can the Existing Field Accommodate?	Can an Expanded Field Accommodate?
Football (youth)	80 yds x 45 yds	Yes	Yes
Football (high school)	120 yds x 53 ½ yd	No	Yes
Lacrosse (K – 4 th)	70 yds x 45 yds	Yes	Yes
Lacrosse (5 th - high school)	110 yds x 60 yds	No	Yes (but no border)
Soccer (K – 4 th)	70 yds x 45 yds	Yes	Yes
Soccer (5 th – high school)	110 yds x 65 yds	No	No
Field Hockey (K – 4 th)	70 yds x 45 yds	Yes	Yes
Field Hockey (5 th – high school)	100 yds x 60 yds	No	Yes (but no border)

Note: The above dimensions for the youth and lower grade athletes are approximate dimensions and can vary from one organization to another.

As shown above, youth football, lacrosse, soccer and field hockey can all be accommodated on the existing and possibly expanded athletic field. The enlarging of the field will also allow for the use of a 100-yard football field labeled for high school use and youth leagues that are moving up towards the high school dimensions. Full size older age lacrosse and field hockey field use could fit within the fenced areas but there would be no space between the playing field and the surrounding fence and would not be recommended.

Overall, widening of the existing football field would be useful for youth age sports but full-size fields that will reach the dimensions recommended for older children and high school players could not be obtained without negatively impacting adjacent little league fields or common areas.

CO Johnson Park Field Lighting

Cory Stoner, Township Engineer, obtained price quotes for the replacement of the field lighting that exists today for the football field at Carl O. Johnson Park. As discussed with the Council and as outlined in his June 30, 2026, memo, his recommendation that the Township install new LED field lights on steel poles around the existing football field like. A manufacturer that my office has specified on similar projects and that we recommend is Musco Sports Lighting (Musco). The quotes that were obtained were prepared by Musco specifically for this field at Carl O. Johnson Park.

The quotes obtained provided for two options. One option would be for the lighting of the field to provide 30 footcandle coverage for the entire field. This coverage would meet current lighting recommendations for football, soccer and field hockey use. The second option would provide 50 footcandle coverage for the entire field as recommended for lacrosse field use. The prices quoted specifically for this field at Carl O. Johnson Park are as follows:

Musco Light-Structure System (30 Footcandle Solution) \$ 335,000 to \$ 350,000
Musco Light-Structure System (50 Footcandle Solution) \$ 420,000 to \$ 435,000

The quotes were prepared with the understanding that the light poles would be positioned to provide lighting for the football field area, adjacent common areas and future lighting of the little league baseball field immediately adjacent (Field #2). These quotes include the installation of light poles, field distribution and controls, all conduits and wiring, remote monitoring and on/off controls and a 25-year warranty program.

The lighting for this initial field at Carl O. Johnson Park will come at a higher cost than other fields that may receive lights in the future. This increased cost is due to the installation of the initial field distribution and controls panels for the park facility. These panels are the central location where power to each light pole is provided and control for all light monitoring and on/off conditions is established. If other fields are planned for lighting in the future, those fields will connect to this same distribution and controls panel that will be installed with this initial field with minor modifications for whatever fields are added.

The governing body authorizes the Township Manager and Engineer to move forward withing going out to bid for Light-Structure System (for both 30 and 50 Footcandle Solutions).

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

TOWNSHIP MANAGER, MAYOR, AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Township Manager – Next Council meeting is September 1st. Byram Fest will be held on Saturday August 22nd at CO Johnson Field. 2027 Budget is being worked on and is expecting responses from department heads next week.

Mayor Rubenstein – Nothing to Report.

Councilman Esposito – Nothing to Report.

Councilwoman Franco – Recreation Committee met and finished up the budget to be completed by Deb, no increase requesting the same as the 2026 budget. Byram Fest is set for August 22nd. All confirmations, orders, and set up are set. We are looking forward to a great day.

Councilman Gallagher – The next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for August 19th at 7:00 p.m.

Councilman Proctor – The next planning board meeting is scheduled for August 20th at 7:30pm. Environmental Commission meeting is scheduled for August 27th at 7:00 p.m.

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

July 28, 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	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. 146-2026 – Resolution Authorizing Participation in an Electronic Tax Sale
- B. Resolution No. 147-2026 – Resolution Authorizing Electronic Tax Sale Notice Fees
- C. Resolution No. 148-2026 – Resolution Authorizing 100% Disabled Veteran Exempt Status to Owner of Block 6 Lot 515 for Tax year 2026 and the Partial Cancellation of 3rd Quarter Taxes as Well as the Remaining Second Half of 2026
- D. Resolution No. 149-2026 - Resolution to Purchase Rock Salt Under the Sussex County Cooperative Pricing System for Budget Year 2026
- E. Resolution No. 150-2026 - Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Township of Byram, County of Sussex and State of New Jersey, Endorsing the 2026 Amended Housing Element and Fair Share Plan Adopted by the Planning Board of the Township of Byram on August 6, 2026
- F. Resolution No. 151-2026 - Authorization to Acquire Sewer Pump Station Equipment for the Daily Operations of the Byram Township Sewer Utility Department
- G. Resolution No. 152-2026 – Authorizing to Acquire Snow Removal Equipment for the Township o f Byram Department of Public Works
- H. Resolution No. 153-2026 – Chapter 159 – Opioid Settlement Funds \$7,441.00

- I. Resolution No. 154-2026 - A Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Byram, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Mayor to Execute All Documents Necessary for the Submission of an Application to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the Construction of the New Byram Township Police Department
- J. Resolution No. 155-2026 - Resolution of the Township of Byram Appointing an Acting Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer and the Authorization of a Stipend
- K. Resolution No. 156-2026 - Resolution of the Township of Byram Supporting the Appointment of a Code Enforcement Officer for Managing Property Maintenance Complaints Involving Dead and Dying Trees and the Authorization of a Stipend
- L. Resolution No. 157-2026 – 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 the 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					

BILL LIST – August 11, 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					

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
2027 Municipal Budget Goals and Objectives

- Mayor Rubenstein:**
- Advance the Police Department project.
 - Continuing COJ Park improvements.
 - Plan to replenish capital reserve funds in future years, particularly following their anticipated use for the Police Department project, to maintain strong capital reserves.
- Councilwoman Franco:**
- Continue planning for the Police Building.
 - Develop a plan for the Administration Building.
 - Develop a streets and roads plan, with emphasis on East Brookwood following water line construction for the Superfund residences and improve drainage on Brookwood Road at Briar Lane.
 - Develop a plan for improvements to the CO Johnson Building.
 - Continue planning CO Johnson improvements, including the “circle” roadway around the park and the transfer of impervious coverage.
- Councilman Proctor:**
- Evaluate alternatives to the State Health Benefits Program to control rising costs, including joining a Health Insurance Fund as soon as practicable.
 - Explore design options for the CO Johnson field house that incorporates community center space and a dais for public meetings.
- Councilman Gallagher:**
- Continue advancing infrastructure projects, including road and stormwater improvements and addressing obstacles within the powerline corridor.
 - Review Administration staffing needs and continue identifying shared-service opportunities where they would benefit the Township.
 - Complete the plan for the CO Johnson facility.
 - Plan for upgrades to the Township municipal complex, including Police Headquarters, the DPW building, and the Administration building.
- Councilman Esposito:**
- Develop an action plan and pro forma for relocating municipal administrative offices, focusing on leasing or lease-to-purchase options rather than new construction. Form a building committee to evaluate alternatives.
 - Schedule a public meeting with Andover officials, Council, and the Manager to discuss potential shared service opportunities and identify efficiencies across municipal operations.

3. Build on the Brookwood drainage report by preparing Phase 1 for bid.
4. Evaluate the private-property easements needed for West Brookwood drainage improvements and form an exploratory group to advance the project.
5. Continue working toward completion of outstanding CO Johnson projects.

JCP&L Reliability Docket and Intervention

The mayor reported on correspondence received regarding two New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) proceedings involving Jersey Central Power & Light Company (JCP&L), including the Board’s Order to Show Cause (Docket No. EO25070453) and the July 4th Weekend Outages Public Comment Docket (Docket No. EO26070387). The mayor advised that municipalities within JCP&L’s service area have an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and raise concerns regarding electric service reliability, storm response, communication with local officials, vegetation management, infrastructure, and other service-related matters affecting residents and public safety.

The mayor advised that the Township Attorney prepared a Motion to Intervene on behalf of the Township of Byram in NJBPU Docket No. EO25070453. The Motion requests that the Township be granted intervenor status, or alternatively, participant status, and identifies the Township’s concerns regarding recurring outages, vegetation conditions, blocked roads, restoration delays, and the impact of electric service interruptions on residents and essential services. The Motion also references the July 3, 2026, wind and lightning event, which resulted in widespread outages affecting more than 1,400 of approximately 3,200 meters in the Township and obstructed the only vehicular access to approximately 40 residences.

The mayor advised that he reviewed and certified the factual statements contained in the Motion and that the Township Attorney filed the Motion to Intervene and the Mayor’s Certification with the NJBPU on August 11, 2026.

The Governing Body discussed the Township’s participation in the NJBPU proceeding. Upon motion of Councilman Esposito, seconded by Councilwoman Franco, the Governing Body ratified the filing of the Motion to Intervene and the Mayor’s Certification in NJBPU Docket No. EO25070453 and authorized the Township’s continued participation in the proceeding. Motion carried by the following vote:

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

The Governing Body discussed the Township’s participation in the NJBPU proceeding and submitted comments. Upon motion of Councilman Esposito, seconded by Councilman Proctor, the Governing Body authorize Mayor Rubenstein to submit comments on behalf of council for the July 3rd docket. Motion carried by the following vote:

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

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Admin Building

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION II

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

No Comments.

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

RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION – Motion by Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Gallagher, 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
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BYRAM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Certification: I certify that the Byram Township Council adopted the above resolution on August 11, 2026.

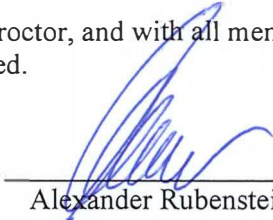
Cynthia Church, Municipal Clerk

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

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Councilwoman Franco, second by Councilman Proctor, and with all members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 10:33 p.m. All members were in favor. Motion carried.


Cynthia Church, RMC
Township Clerk


Alexander Rubenstein, Mayor