



CITY OF RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 2, 2026
7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council President Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and asked for a Roll Call.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and INVOCATION

Council President Brooks led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmember Brown offered an Invocation.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT:

City Clerk Capone read: Notice of this meeting has been sent to the official newspapers and adequate and electronic notice has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act as required by law.

PRESENTATION REGARDING WATER UTILITY

Mayor Giacobbe explained the future of the City of Rahway's drinking water system and the possible sale of the City's water utility to an outside water company. Stated that this is an issue that affects every household, business and family in Rahway. Discussed research performed by City professionals that led to this decision.

Michael Willis of T&M Associates provided an overview and analysis of the potential sale of the City of Rahway's Water System Utility.

Jim Spanarkel of Waters McPherson McNeill, P.C, discussed the potential timeline if the water utility was sold.

Mayor Giacobbe thanked everyone involved with this initiative. Assured the residents that the City will keep them informed every step of the way.

PRESENTATION QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD

The City Council asked the following questions regarding the presentation:

- 1) Timing of the sale
- 2) Entities that will receive free water and for how long
- 3) Rate structure
- 4) Cons of selling
- 5) Senior discounts
- 6) Impact on the city if the residents vote against selling the water utility
- 7) What environmental standards will be implemented

- 8) Will the response time for emergencies stay the same
- 9) How will the current debt be handled if the utility is sold

Council President Brooks opened the floor for the Public Hearing of Citizens on the Presentation.

Dennis Swearer, 179 W. Milton Avenue

Mr. Swearer questioned how the City would benefit from a third-party water supplier. Feels the City Council needs to consider the independence of the City's water supply seriously. Mentioned that the third-party would have to incur the same costs of maintaining the water supply unit which would be passed onto the residents.

Jeff Robinson, 244 Stanton Street

Mr. Robinson spoke in opposition to the sale of the water facility. Explained that the priority of a water company is to make profit. Feels the City should be educating the residents on this.

Quaane Palmer Chambliss, Plainfield NJ

Ms. Chambliss is opposed to the sale of the water facility. Would like to see more representation for the minority community. Wonders how much money all the research has cost the City already. Interested to see who will truly benefit from this.

Kevin Gartland, 1245 Main Street

Mr. Gartland spoke in opposition to the sale of the water facility. Provided an explanation of how the rate hikes will work. Is hopeful the residents will follow in the footsteps of Gouster County and reject the sale of the water facility.

Andrew Garcia Phillips, 1470 Campbell Street

Mr. Phillips explained that all the same problems with the facility will still exist if they sell it to a third party, which will result in rate hikes for the residents. Concerned that the City will be losing the surplus that it currently receives from the water utility. Question why there is deferred maintenance when the city should have been using the surplus to maintain it.

Mr. Michael Willis of T&M Associates explained the rate increases between the public and private entities.

Alan Levy, 254 Oak Street

Mr. Levy believes the entire Rahway community will oppose the sale of the water utility. Discussed the typical rate increase of privately owned water utilities.

Jim Betz, 1124 Pierpont Street

Mr. Betz stated that water is the most essential human resource. Spoke about the increase of AI data centers and a study that was done linking private water utilities with higher water increases. Discussed issues that arose when privatizing a water facility.

Charlie Kratovil, Central Jersey Food and Water Watch

Mr. Kratovil questioned whether a City representative has met with any of the private water companies to discuss the proposal. Mentioned that privatizing the water will result in residents paying more and getting less. Respectfully requested the Council to hold off on adopting Resolution AR-55-26. Brought a petition and encourages anyone against this initiative to please sign it.

Amy Gracia Phillips, 1470 Campbell Street

Ms. Phillips reiterated previous comments made by the residents regarding rate increases and facility maintenance. Worried who the residents will contact if there is an issue with a private water company. Feels the Council should reconsider.

Marlane Hamm, 286 W. Inman Avenue

Ms. Hamm asked if the presentation will be available to the public after tonight's meeting. Suggested the City start fixing current problems before privatizing.

Mayor Giacobbe informed the public that the presentation will be on the City's website, several social media platforms and broadcasted on TV 34.

With no one else appearing, a motion was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Eastman, to close the Public Hearing portion of the meeting.

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Newbury and seconded by Councilmember Montesdeoca to accept and approve the January 12, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes.

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

City Clerk Capone stated that there were no reports.

COMMUNICATIONS: MAYOR, REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND BILL PAYMENT

City Clerk Capone stated that the Council received the Payment of Bills and the Fire Report for the month of January 2026.

The Council accepted the Payment of Bills.

MAYOR COMMENTS / ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Mayor Giacobbe thanked the Department of Public Works for their efforts with snow removal. Provided information for the public regarding snow removal within the City. Invited everyone to his State of the City Address on February 26, 2026. Congratulated the newly appointed officers to the NAACP. Wished everyone a Happy Black History Month.

Chief of Staff Landolfi discussed the process in privatizing the water facility. Provided an explanation on Resolution AR-54-26.

ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION SUMMARIES

Business Administrator Pukavich provided a summary for the council and the public of items on the agenda to be voted on.

HEARING OF CITIZENS ON RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING OR ANY OTHER ITEM (excluding Ordinances on Final Adoption/Second Reading) (Five minutes per speaker)

Council President Brooks opened the floor for the Hearing of Citizens.

Quanae Palmer Chambliss, Plainfield NJ

Ms. Chambliss would like the questions she asked during the presentation to be answered. Believes selling the water utility would not be a good move for Rahway.

Jeff Robinson, 244 Stanton Street

Mr. Robinson informed the public that he was the chairperson of the Environmental Commission for 20 years. Stated that safe healthy water is an environmental issue and not once has this issue been brought to the Environmental Commission's attention. Asked the Council to consider tabling Resolution AR-55-26.

Andrew Garcia Phillips, 1470 Campbell Street

Mr. Phillips feels there are a range of options that could be done if the City's water facility is not bought by a private entity. Spoke about the privatization of Chicago's parking utility, Atlanta's water utility and Bayonne's water utility. Asked what would happen if the City didn't sell the water utility. Suggested the resolution be tabled and reconsidered.

Alan Levy, 254 Oak Street

Mr. Levy spoke about free market capitalism. Feels the selling of the City's water utility is not free market capitalism. Discussed private donations made to the Democratic Committee. Questioned the future of the workers for the current water utility. Mentioned a lawsuit filed against him and his wife.

Cynthia Goodman, Rahway NAACP President

Mr. Goodman stated she is the newly elected president of the NAACP. Thanked the Council President for officiating the ceremony and the Mayor for his comments. Requests the Council to table Resolution AR-55-26.

Lorin Fernandez, 98 Colonia Boulevard

Ms. Fernandez suggested the Council table Resolution AR-55-26. Feels communication with the residents could be improved and the Council only acts on matters they choose to prioritize. Stated that the privatization of the water utility will result in higher costs for the residents with profits for the company.

Shawn Golden, 185 W. Main Street

Mr. Golden spoke about the impact of ongoing construction on small local businesses. Provided a brief history on his experience with owning a small business in the City over the past year. Supports

development but is asking for a parallel economic mitigation. Would like to help the City create solutions to help the local businesses and the City's economic baseline.

Christen Sturkie, 1124 Pierpont Street

Ms. Sturkie recommends the Council prioritize communicating with the residents better.

Jim Betz, 1124 Pierpont Street

Mr. Betz spoke about snow removal across the street from the Verizon building.

With no one else appearing, a motion was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Gibilisco, to close the Public Hearing portion of the meeting.

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

O-7-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 177: CONSTRUCTION CODES, UNIFORM, OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY

Motion to introduce the above title Ordinance was made by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Newbury and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

O-8-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING LAND USE LEGISLATION, CHAPTER 421 (ZONING) TO MODIFY SIGNAGE REGULATIONS FOR CLASS 5 CANNABIS LICENSED RETAIL BUSINESSES IN THE CITY OF RAHWAY

Motion to introduce the above title Ordinance was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Eastman and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

NO: Council Vice President Mojica

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

City Clerk Capone declared the ordinances adopted on first reading and will advertise said notice of introduction and passage according to law. These Ordinances will come up for Public Hearing and further action at a Council Meeting on March 2, 2026 at 7 p.m. or at any time and place to which the meeting for further consideration of the ordinances shall be adjourned.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made at 9:15 PM to go into Executive Session to discuss Resolution AR-55-26 was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Eastman, and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eatman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

Motion made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Council Vice President Mojica to return to open session at 9:26 PM.

City Attorney Minchello explained the reasoning for Executive Session was to discuss contractual matters involving Resolution AR-55-26.

CONSENT AGENDA

All resolutions are considered routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Council Member or citizen requests. Any item not included on the Consent Agenda will be considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

Motion made by Councilmember Newbury and seconded by Council Vice President Mojica to adopt Resolutions AR-53-26 through AR-71-26 on Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda was adopted by the following vote.

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

Administration

AR-53-26 A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND ADOPTING THE CENTRAL JERSEY MUNICIPAL JOINT INSURANCE FUND'S 2025 SAFETY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

AR-54-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CELL TOWER LEASE AND/OR LICENSE AGREEMENTS FOR CELL TOWERS LOCATED ON PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY OF RAHWAY

- AR-55-26** A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY DEEMING IT ADVISABLE TO CONSIDER THE SALE OF THE RAHWAY WATER UTILITY AND AUTHORIZING THE ADVERTISEMENT OF BIDS FOR THE SALE OF SAME
- AR-56-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF LINDEN FOR DIESEL MECHANIC SERVICES
- AR-57-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK FOR THE PROVISION OF TAX ASSESSOR SERVICES

Police Department

- AR-58-26** A RESOLUTION AWARDED A CONTRACT TO LEXIPOL LLC, FOR POLICY TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION MAINTENANCE
- AR-59-26** A RESOLUTION AWARDED A CONTRACT TO POWERDMS INC, FOR SCHEDULING, POLICY AND TRAINING SOFTWARE PLATFORMS
- AR-60-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT FROM THE RSI FOUNDATION OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NEW JERSEY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 FOR THE “COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE” PROJECT

Health Department

- AR-61-26** A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT AND RECEIVE A GRANT FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - OFFICE OF LOCAL HEALTH FOR ENHANCING LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT
- AR-62-26** A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT AND RECEIVE A GRANT FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - OFFICE OF LOCAL HEALTH FOR SUSTAINING LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT

Revenue & Finance

- AR-63-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF MONEY DUE TO THE REDEMPTION OF TAX SALE CERTIFICATES FOR 2024 AND 2025 TAX LIENS
- AR-64-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE REFUND OF PROPERTY TAX OVERPAYMENTS PURSUANT TO TAX COURT JUDGEMENTS – E&H REALITY LLC

Engineering & Land Use

- AR-65-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RELEASE OF THE RIGHT OF WAY MAINTENANCE BOND FEE TO RAFAEL RAMOS FOR PERMIT #12-24-098 DATED 12/2/2024 FOR BLOCK 62, LOT 8 (467 Grove Street)
- AR-66-26** A RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT TO SHAUGER PROPERTY SERVICES, INC. FOR EMERGENCY SINKHOLE REPAIR AT 466-482 SEMINARY AVENUE PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:11-6

- AR-67-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF RAHWAY AND WHITESTONE ASSOCIATES, INC. FOR WELL ABANDONMENT, GROUNDWATER MONITORING AND REGULATORY REPORTING COMPLIANCE SERVICES FOR 80 E. MILTON AVENUE
- AR-68-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CHANGE ORDER TO THE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF RAHWAY AND T&M ASSOCIATES FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH WATER TREATMENT PLAN EVALUATION – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING
- AR-69-26** A RESOLUTION AWARDED THE ACCEPTANCE OF BID FOR THE PASEO IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR THE CITY OF RAHWAY TO LANDTEK CONSTRUCTION LLC. DBA UNITED TERRAIN GROUP

Code Enforcement

- AR-70-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING LIENS AGAINST CERTAIN PROPERTIES TO RECOVER CLEANUP COSTS INCURRED BY THE CITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 151-4 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY AND N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.14

Department of Public Works

- AR-71-26** A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A NEW S76 T4 BOBCAT SKID STEER LOADER ESCNJ CONTRACT PRICE FOR THE RAHWAY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

ORDINANCES – FINAL ADOPTION / SECOND READING

- O-01-26** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION N.J.S. 40A: 4-53 FUNDING OF TERMINAL PAY FOR RETIRED EMPLOYEES

Council President Brooks opened the Public Hearing on this matter and asked if any citizen wished to be heard and give his/her name and address. Seeing none, Council President Brooks closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance O-01-26.

Motion to adopt the above titled Ordinance O-01-26 was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Eastman and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica,
Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

- O-02-26** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 401 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) - (Removing Permit Parking on a portion of Central Ave)

Council President Brooks opened the Public Hearing on this matter and asked if any citizen wished to be heard and give his/her name and address. Seeing none, Council President Brooks closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance O-02-26.

Motion to adopt the above titled Ordinance O-02-26 was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Montesdeoca and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica,
Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

O-03-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 401 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) – (Adding permit parking in designated areas on Central Ave)

Council President Brooks opened the Public Hearing on this matter and asked if any citizen wished to be heard and give his/her name and address. Seeing none, Council President Brooks closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance O-03-26.

Motion to adopt the above titled Ordinance O-03-26 was made by Councilmember Newbury, seconded by Councilmember Miles and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica,
Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

O-04-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 401 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) – (Handicapped Parking on Campbell Street)

Council President Brooks opened the Public Hearing on this matter and asked if any citizen wished to be heard and give his/her name and address. Seeing none, Council President Brooks closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance O-04-26.

Motion to adopt the above titled Ordinance O-04-26 was made by Council Vice President Mojica, seconded by Councilmember Eastman and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica,
Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

O-05-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 401 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) – (Adding Permit parking in designated areas on Essex Street and Johnson Street)

Council President Brooks opened the Public Hearing on this matter and asked if any citizen wished to be heard and give his/her name and address. Seeing none, Council President Brooks closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance O-05-26.

Motion to adopt the above titled Ordinance O-05-26 was made by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Montesdeoca and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

O-06-26 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 401 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RAHWAY (VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) – (Removing Permit Parking in designated areas on Essex Street and Johnson Street)

Council President Brooks opened the Public Hearing on this matter and asked if any citizen wished to be heard and give his/her name and address. Seeing none, Council President Brooks closed the Public Hearing for Ordinance O-06-26.

Motion to adopt the above titled Ordinance O-06-26 was made by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Montesdeoca and adopted by the following vote:

YES: Councilmembers Brown, Eastman, Gibilisco, Miles, Mojica, Montesdeoca, Newbury, Brooks

ABSENT: Councilmember Parson

Council President Brooks declared the motion carried.

MISCELLANEOUS (Unfinished Business) - NONE

COUNCIL COMMENTS

The Councilmembers offered their comments.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Newbury and seconded by Councilmember Brown. The meeting was officially adjourned at 9:50 pm without objection on a voice vote.

Approved:

Heather Capone, RMC
City Clerk

Jeffrey Brooks
Council President