

REGULAR MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
APRIL 14, 2025

Mayor Chegwidden called the Meeting to Order.

Mayor Chegwidden read the Open Public Meeting Statement.

Roll Call

Mayor Chegwidden requested Roll Call:

Council President Norton – Absent, excused
Councilman Binkoski – Present
Councilwoman Jones - Present
Councilwoman Vasquez - Present
Councilwoman Wickenheisser – Present
Councilman Yeager- Present

Also in attendance were Administrator Joseph Kovalcik Jr., Borough Clerk Gabrielle Evangelista, and Attorney Roman Hirniak

Flag Salute

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

Mayor Chegwidden requested a moment of silence in honor of the passing of Council President Norton’s mother.

Presentation

Picatunny Enhancement Coalition- Paul Chiodo from the Picatunny Enhancement Coalition made a presentation about Picatunny Arsenal and its role in our local community.

Open to the Public

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

Jennifer Hobbs, Fern Ave.: Ms. Hobbs asked some questions relating to the Resolution about self-examining the budget as well as the salary Ordinance. Mr. Kovalcik advised that the NJDLGS has 2/3 of towns each year self-examine their budget with the Auditor and CFO reviewing it. He continued that the Borough does the salary range via Ordinance and the specifics via personal action forms, which are reviewed by Department Heads, the Administrator, and the Auditors.

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

2025 Budget

Ordinance

Councilman Yeager presented O-5-25, “An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a CAP Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14),” on second reading, by title only.

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on this Ordinance only.

Paul Breda, Potter Lane: Mr. Breda asked how this Ordinance fits with the budget. Mr. Kovalcik advised that this is for CAP calculation and the levy CAP rule is COLA or 2% and we have to do this as basically a savings bank when COLA is 0%.

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

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to adopt O-05-25 on second and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Resolution

Councilman Binkoski introduced R-69-25 “Resolution to Authorize Wharton Borough to Self-Examine the 2025 Municipal Budget.”

A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser to adopt Resolution R-69-25.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Resolution

Councilwoman Vasquez introduced R-70-25 “Resolution to Read the Budgets by Title Only.”

A motion was made by Councilwoman Vasquez and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser to adopt Resolution R-70-25.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

2025 Municipal Budget

Mr. Kovalcik made a presentation relating to the 2025 Budget and advised that our levy is down. The Borough’s Auditor, Mr. Sarinelli advised that this budget is a reflection of the Borough’s multiyear long-term planning.

Councilman Binkoski presented Resolution R-57-25, The 2025 Municipal Budget for final adoption.

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on the 2025 Municipal Budget only.

Jennifer Hobbs: She asked if there was a cost estimate on the parking on Pine Street discussed at the previous meeting. It was explained that the project is still in the design phase. She then asked about help for businesses that are impacted by the Rt. 80 closure. Mayor Chegwidden advised that that Borough has organized multiple meetings with State, Federal, and other agencies that are providing various forms of assistance, we have also worked with the NJEDA and the SBA on grant and loan options and are hosting the SBA Business Recovery Center. We are also waiving liquor license renewal fees and outdoor dining permit fees for this year as well as putting together special advertising for local businesses.

Paul Breda: Mr. Breda asked some questions relating to the budget and changes from the previous year. Mr. Kovalcik answered his questions and advised that the tax rate is going down 10%, but that is only a part of the tax bill. The Borough also collects for the Wharton and regional schools, the County, open space, and the library. We receive an equalized value from the State for the rate.

Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilwoman Jones to adopt R-57-25, The 2025 Municipal Budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

2025 Special District Budget

Councilman Yeager presented Resolution R-58-25, The 2025 Special District Budget for final adoption.

Mayor Chegwiddden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on the 2025 Special District Budget only.

It was noted that this levy is also down.

Mayor Chegwiddden closed the meeting to the public.

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to adopt R-58-25, The 2025 Special District Budget.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Ordinance

Councilwoman Wickenheisser presented O-6-25, “An Ordinance Fixing the Salary of Certain Officers and Employees of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey,” on second reading, by title only.

Mayor Chegwiddden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on this Ordinance only.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wickenheisser and was seconded by Councilwoman Jones to adopt O-06-25 on second and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Ordinance

Councilwoman Jones presented O-7-25, “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 315, Article III, Sections 16 and 17 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey,” on second reading, by title only.

Mayor Chegwiddden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on this Ordinance only.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Jones and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser to adopt O-07-25 on second and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Ordinance

Councilman Binkoski introduced O-8-25, “An Ordinance to Provide for Reappropriation of Water Capital Projects Enumerated Within for the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris and to Provide for the Funding Thereof,” on first reading, by title only.

A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser to adopt O-8-25 on first reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Mayor Chegwiddden set the date of May 12, 2025 for second and final reading.

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.

<p>Approval of Bills: Approve all bills referred to the Finance Committee</p> <p>R-71-25: Support Preservation of Federal Tax Exemption of Municipal Bonds R-72-25: Refund Tax Overpayment 1703/8 R-73-25: Oppose Legislation that Would Preempt Local Planning R-74-25: Tax Sale Redemption TSC 2022-010 R-75-25: Tax Sale Redemption TSC 2024-009 R-76-25: Authorize Issuance of Bids R-77-25: Prof. Service- CHA Baker Avenue Phase 3&4 R-78-25: Authorize Appointment of Special Counsel for Eminent Domain Matters R-79-25: Prof. Service- CHA Pine Street Recycling Center Rehabilitation R-80-25: Authorize Grant Application- NJDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program 2025 R-81-25: Improvement Authorization Partial Cancelation R-82-25: Prof. Service- CHA 27 East Sterling St.- Supplemental to Columbia St. Park Rehab Project</p> <p>Approve waiving Borough liquor license renewal fees for 2025 and outdoor dining permit application fees for 2025.</p> <p>Blue Light Permit Application: Cesar Rios Rosas</p> <p>A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilman Yeager to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.</p> <p>ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 1 ABSTAIN: 0</p> <p>MOTION CARRIED</p>

Correspondence

- **Morris County Planning Board Minutes**
- **Notice of Resolution Hanover Township**

Council Reports

Council President Norton: Absent.

Councilman Binkoski: His condolences to Council President Norton. Thank you to Mr. Kovalick for his work on the budget. He recently became chair of the finance

committee and he came into a really good program. He attended the second business support meeting and has discussed the state grant program with the NJEDA and they've been very cooperative and responsive. People are noticing that it's affecting all of us and he appreciates that people care.

Councilwoman Jones: She also attended the business support meeting and soccer's opening day.

Councilwoman Vasquez: Thank you to Mr. Kovalcik for his work on the budget and thank you to former Councilwoman Hayes, Councilman Yeager, and Councilman Binkoski for all of their work and help. She also attended the business support meeting and thanks the Mayor and Ms. Evangelista for their work on this. Other towns use our example of teamwork and taking care of our people. She also attended the opening ceremony for soccer, which was very nice. She appreciates that they use older kids as refs.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She attended the Fire Department beefsteak dinner, and the spring sports rec. meeting. The Little League parade is coming up as well as the Fire Department Easter Egg hunt. She attended several meetings relating to business support and it really has been a team effort. Ms. Evangelista, the Mayor, and the Council have worked together on coordinating things. She's discussed assistance that the Morris County Chamber of Commerce can provide. They have been helping a lot and are offering a significantly reduced membership fee.

Councilman Yeager: He introduced R-84-25 and explains that it is for a mental health program for the Police and it will be a real benefit to the department and the community and made a motion to approve the Resolution. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 5	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 1	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

He also attended the business meetings.

Mayor Chegwiddden's Report: Thank you to Chief Young for the new stop sign ordinance. He attended multiple meetings and calls relating to Rt. 80. Thank you to the NJDOT, they really are doing their best. He also attended multiple meetings relating to business support. He can't say enough about how Federal, State, County, and Local have all pulled together about this and hopefully it can offer some relief. Thank you also to the Governor's office for all of their work and assistance. He met with the new Superintendent of the Wharton schools and wishes her well. He attended soccer opening day and the Fire Department beefsteak dinner.

Open to the Public

Mayor Chegwiddden opened the meeting to the public.

Scott Hutchins, Columbia St.: He advised that due to his role in town, he drives around a lot and wanted to note that a big part of keeping our businesses in business is local support. Please visit them regularly..

Jennifer Hobbs: Ms. Hobbs stated that the townspeople can't just support the businesses, they need more than that. Councilwoman Wickenheisser advised her that as we've been discussing the Borough has been doing quite a lot in support of the businesses and have coordinated with the appropriate agencies that are offering multiple avenues of support.

Barbara Tarcheck, Westview: She offered kudos to Mr. Hutchins and his staff, they do a terrific job. She also thanks the wonderful senior bus driver, Mr. Dingman.

Paul Breda: Mr. Breda asked about a timetable for the Pine Street parking lot. He was told we are waiting on environmental results at this time. He also asked a few additional questions about the budget.

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

Closed Session

Councilwoman Vasquez introduced R-83-25 to close the meeting to the public for discussion upon Contracts.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Vasquez and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to approve R-83-25.

This motion was approved via voice vote.

Councilman Yeager made a motion to return to open session, which was seconded by Councilman Binkoski.

This motion was approved via voice vote.

Adjournment

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

April 14, 2025

BOROUGH OF WHARTON

ATTEST:

WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,
MAYOR

Gabrielle Evangelista,
Borough Clerk