

REGULAR MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 23, 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

Also in attendance were Administrator David Young, Borough Clerk Cheryl Muzzillo and Attorney Roman Hirniak.

Flag Salute

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

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

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

Ordinance

Councilwoman Gonzalez presented O-03-26, “An Ordinance to Provide for General Capital Projects Enumerated Within for the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris and to Provide for the Funding Thereof,” on second reading by title only.

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

Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Gonzalez and seconded by Councilman Yeager to adopt O-03-26 on second and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0
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Ordinance

Councilwoman Hobbs introduced O-04-26, “An Ordinance of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey Repealing Article 16 “Fair Share Ordinance” and Repealing and Replacing Chapter 64 “Affordable Housing” of the Code of the Borough of Wharton to Address the Requirements of the Fair Housing Act and to Comply with the Borough’s Round Four Affordable Housing Obligations,” on first reading by title only.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Hobbs and seconded by Council President Binkoski to adopt O-04-26 on first reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0
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Mayor Chegwidden set the date of March 16, 2026 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.

Approval of Bills: Approve all bills referred to the Finance Committee
Approval of Minutes: 2/6/26

R-60-26: Tax Sale Redemption TSC 2024-013 Stonefield Investments
R-61-26: 2027 Reassessment Program
R-62-26: Reserve Budget Transfers

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

Correspondence

- **Notice of Land Use Ordinances – Rockaway Township**
- **Notice of Ordinances – Rockaway Township**
- **Notice of Ordinances – Jefferson Township**

Council Reports

Council President Binkoski: He recognized the DPW for another great job with snow removal and thanked them and the Police Department for their efforts. He also met with the tax assessor and Mr. Young to discuss the Reassessment Program, emphasizing that this thorough process is vital for maintaining the stability of future budgets.

Councilwoman Gonzalez: She thanked the DPW for their outstanding work clearing the roads and their work on the water main breaks, as well as the Police Department for directing traffic. She congratulated Chief Young for the work of Detectives Baracaldo and Norton for their efforts to apprehend and extradite a child predator to New Jersey for prosecution.

Regarding ICE, she affirmed Mayor Chegwiddden’s statement on following Attorney General directions and no direct contact with ICE is true. She stated as far as she is aware ICE does not contact the Police Department to let them know when they will be here. She acknowledged that while there is little to nothing that can be done by the Mayor and Council she wanted to express her personal support for Roxbury’s opposition to a local detention center.

Additionally, she attended an orientation for newly elected officials.

Councilwoman Hobbs: In addition to commending the DPW, Councilwoman Hobbs attended the orientation for new officials, the RVRSA Re-Org, and Planning Board meetings. She also voiced her support for Roxbury’s opposition to the ICE facility.

Councilwoman Jones: She thanked the DPW and Police Department for their storm response. She reported a significant increase in library program attendance, which rose from 48,810 in 2024 to 54,096 in 2025. She also attended the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting, as well as a guided breathing session at the library.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She thanked the DPW for the efforts during the storm. She also congratulated Chief Young and Detectives Baracaldo and Norton. She made a special mention of resident Steve Machuga for quickly coming to the assistance of a neighbor in need. She announced upcoming Municipal Alliance events, including an April "Spring Fling Sock Hop" for seniors and the return of the carnival in May. Preparations are also underway for America’s 250th anniversary, featuring a house decorating contest and commemorative merchandise. She thanked Ms. Vasquez, who is working on the Municipal Alliance Program, for her hard work getting these programs up and running. She also thanked the Wharton Soccer Club for jumping in to handle some things for the carnival.

Councilman Yeager: He highlighted that the town’s no-street-parking policy contributed to the success of recent snow removal. He also attended the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting.

Mayor Chegwidden's Report

- He praised the coordination between the DPW and Police Department during the recent snowstorm and highlighted the Borough's planning and budgeting over the years that resulted in the purchase of equipment needed to ensure their jobs aren't made harder than they already are. He also noted that JCP&L reported no power outages in town during the storm.
- He thanked Chief Young and commended the work of Detectives Baracaldo and Norton.
- He reported the repair work continues on the Route 15 bridge.
- He had a meeting with Councilwoman Wickenheisser and Ms. Vasquez and is excited for the 250th Anniversary Celebration event.
- He shared concerns from the Morris County League of Municipalities regarding state budget issues and the diversion of energy tax funds away from local municipalities. Furthermore, he met with Jefferson Township Mayor Wilsusen to discuss the impact of the Highlands Act on school funding and taxes.
- He attended the Planning Board meeting, as well as the Washington Association's 152nd meeting, where historian and author, Richard Bell, was in attendance.
- Finally, he highlighted for the newly elected Council members the Office of Emergency Management's essential role in coordinating storm responses and infrastructure maintenance.

Open to the Public

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

Jayne Murphy-Morris, 27 Columbia Street: She inquired about the progress of Columbia Street Park. It was explained that the project is currently with the Finance Committee while we await a grant through Senator Booker's office. Once the grant is approved, the estimated timeline for completion is between one and two and a half years. Although the design is complete, the project must go out for bid before work can begin. The final schedule will depend on several variables, including the timing of the approval and weather conditions.

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

Adjournment

A motion was made by Council President Binkoski to adjourn and was seconded by Councilwoman Jones. This motion was approved via voice vote.