

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST**

**ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING
MINUTES**

JANUARY 1, 2024

Mayor Bernstein called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm and read the compliance statement.

The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, have been satisfied by the publication of the date, time and place of this annual Reorganization meeting in in the Record and Star Ledger on December 12, 2023, notice posted at Borough Hall, on the Borough website was filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

COUNCILMAN JONATHAN REISS SWORN IN

Mayor Bernstein advised that according to the official results of the 2023 election as published by the County Board of Elections that **Councilman Jonathan Reiss** has been duly elected, said term expiring 12/31/2026

Honorable Bergen County Commissioner Tracy Silna Zur administered the Oath of Office and Councilman Reiss took his seat on the dais.

COUNCILMAN ADAM COLLINS SWORN IN

Mayor Bernstein advised that according to the official results of the 2023 election as published by the County Board of Elections that **Councilman Adam Collins** has been duly elected, said term expiring 12/31/2026.

Honorable Bergen County Commissioner Steven A. Tanelli administered the Oath of Office and Councilman Collins takes his seat on the dais.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor Bernstein, , Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss, Councilmember Slowikowski

Absent: None

Also Present: Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator
Deena Rosendahl, Borough Attorney
Frank Visaggio, Acting Police Chief

Jason Gangi, DPW Manager
Carl Pavlik, Deputy Fire Chief

COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mayor Bernstein asks for nominations for **President of the Council** for the year 2024.
Councilmember _____ nominates Councilmember _____.

Seconded by Councilmember _____ to confirm.
Mayor Bernstein asks if there are any further nominations.

A motion is made by _____ and seconded by _____ that nominations be closed.

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Bernstein declares **Councilmember _____**, **Council President** for the year 2024.

SEATING ON DAIS: 2024 (from Mayor’s left to right)
Marks, Fox, Collins, MAYOR, Slowikowski, Jiang, Reiss

SWEARING IN DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF

Mayor Bernstein administers the Oath of Office to Frank Visaggio as Deputy Police Chief effective January 1, 2024

SWEARING IN 2024 FIRE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Mayor Bernstein administers the Oath of Office to the 2024 Officers for the Demarest Fire Department:

- Chief John McLoughlin
- Assistant Chief Carl Pavlik
- Captain John Young
- Lieutenant Matthew Carey
- Lieutenant Matthew Mayer

MAYOR’S CITATIONS

Mayor Bernstein advised that he would like to acknowledge and commend the following individuals for service above and beyond the call of duty in 2023. He spoke about their accomplishments and presented each of them with a certificate of commendation:

For service on 2 CPR/NARCAN calls within 24 hours on October 24 & 25, 2023

First Call

EMS

Julie Fortunato
Jeff Geisenheimer
Roberta Hoag

Police

Lt. Michael Bartelucci
PO Connor Owens

Second Call

EMS

Andy Woods
Jeff Geisenheimer
Roberta Hoag

Police

Deputy Chief Frank Visaggio
PO Michael Krynicky

For Water Rescue Led by Demarest Fire Department on September 23, 2023

Fire Chief John McLoughlin
Assistant Fire Chief Carl Pavlik
Captain John Young
Lieutenant Matthew Carey
Firefighter Michael Morrison
Firefighter Kyle Pavlik

BOROUGH OFFICIALS

ROLL CALL:

Fire Official	Alan Silverman	expires 12/31/25
Municipal Housing Liaison	Julie Falkenstern	expires 12/31/24
Shade Tree Advisory Member	Owen Fox	expires 12/31/24
JIF Safety Committee Coordinator	Julie Falkenstern	expires 12/31/24
ADA Coordinator	Daniel Marks	expires 12/31/24

Police Surgeons	Gregory Sathananthan, Zahid Farooki, Jay Kashkin, Stephen Silver	expires 12/31/24
-----------------	---	------------------

Special Police Officers	Louis Buonomo, Kyoung Lee, Matthew Mayer	expires 12/31/24
-------------------------	---	------------------

Deputy OEM Coordinator	Michael Krynicky	expires 12/31/24
------------------------	------------------	------------------

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to confirm the Borough Officials above.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Abstain: Councilmember Fox

MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS WITH THE ADVICE & CONSENT OF COUNCIL

ZONING BOARD ADJUSTMENT

Timothy Woods	12/31/2027
Robert Corrado	12/31/2027
Diana Pavlova Alternate #2	12/31/2025

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox and seconded by Councilmember Collins to confirm the Borough Officials above.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

MAYOR'S APPOINTMENTS (No Council Confirmation needed)

Mayor Bernstein then announced the below Mayoral Appointments.

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dorothy Hayden	12/31/2028
Elaine Kass	12/31/2028
Lynn Ma	12/31/2028
Sandhya Nakani	12/31/2028

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

Linda Cetta	12/31/2028
Ronnie Friedman	12/31/2028

RECREATION COMMISSION

Brandis Buzkin	12/31/2028
Vanessa McAndrews	12/31/2028
Stacie Findanis	12/31/2028

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Jin Kupperman	Alternate #1	12/31/2025
David Lerner	Alternate #2	12/31/2024

PLANNING BOARD

Lynn Paulison	Class IV Member	12/31/2027
Mary Lynn Hamilton	Alternate #1	12/31/2025

Mayor Bernstein then advised that there is a **Class III** member of the **Planning Board** (a member of the Governing Body) to be chosen by the Governing Body. He further stated that Councilmember Fox served well in 2023 in the position and he would like to recommend that Councilmember Fox be nominated for this roll in 2024

Council President Slowikowski nominated Councilmember Fox to serve as Class III member of the Planning Board.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Mayor Bernstein therefore declared **Councilmember Fox Class III** member of the **Planning Board** for the year 2024.

RESOLUTION 001-24

Appointing Acting Borough Clerk

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Fox to approve Resolution 001-24

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

RESOLUTION 002-24

Resolution Adopting Updated By-laws

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Marks to approve Resolution 002-24

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

2024 STANDING COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS:

Mayor Bernstein then announced the below members of Standing Committees and Liaisons for 2024 and noted that the committees have been updated this year.

STANDING COMMITTEES – 2024

Police and OEM

Chair Councilmember Reiss

Members Councilmembers Slowikowski and Marks

Fire and EMS

Chair Councilmember Collins

Members Councilmembers Fox and Marks

DPW and Recreation

Chair Councilmember Marks
Members Councilmembers Reiss and Collins

Finance and Personnel

Chair Councilmember Slowikowski
Members Councilmembers Fox and Collins

Economic Development

Chair Councilmember Jiang
Members Councilmembers Slowikowski and Marks

Ordinances

Chair Councilmember Fox
Members Councilmembers Reiss and Jiang

2024 LIAISON APPOINTMENTS

Board of Education	David Jiang
Board of Health	Jonathan Reiss
Environmental Commission	Andrea Slowikowski
Nature Center	David Jiang
Shade Tree Commission	Adam Collins
Land Use Liaison	Daryl Fox
Library Board	Dan Marks
Demarest Athletic Association (DAA)	Dan Marks
Construction / Code Enforcement	Andrea Slowikowski
Demarest Swim Club	Andrea Slowikowski

CONSENT AGENDA:

Resolution No. 003-24	Designation of Official Newspapers
Resolution No. 004-24	Designation of Legal Depositories
Resolution No. 005-24	Establishment of Interest Rates on Delinquent Taxes & Assessments
Resolution No. 006-24	2024 Cash Management Plan for the Borough
Resolution No. 007-24	Petty Cash Policy
Resolution No. 008-24	Designating Official Tax Search Officer 2024
Resolution No. 009-24	Appointing Fund Commissioners
Resolution No. 010-24	Appointing Assessment Search Officer
Resolution No. 011-24	Appointing Public Compliance Officer
Resolution No. 012-24	Authorizing LESO 1033 Program
Resolution No. 013-24	Authorizing Valley Health CDL Drug and Alcohol Testing Program
Resolution No. 014-24	Temporary Budget Appropriations

Resolution No. 015-24	Approving Tax Receiving Agency
Resolution No. 016-24	Appointing Borough Engineer
Resolution No. 017-24	Appointing Borough Attorney
Resolution No. 018-24	Appointing Special Projects Engineer
Resolution No. 019-24	Appointing Risk Manager
Resolution No. 020-24	Appointing Auditor
Resolution No. 021-24	Appointing Financial Advisor
Resolution No. 022-24	Appointing Bond Counsel
Resolution No. 023-24	Appointing Tax Appeal Attorney
Resolution No. 024-24	Appointing Labor Counsel
Resolution No. 025-24	Appointing Grant Consultant
Resolution No. 026-24	Appointing Conflict Counsel
Resolution No. 027-24	Appointing Borough Planner
Resolution No. 028-24	Appointing Affordable Housing Planner
Resolution No. 029-24	Appointing Affordable Housing Counsel
Resolution No. 030-24	Shared Service with BC for EAP
Resolution No. 031-24	Shared Service with BC for Bloodborne Pathogens
Resolution No. 032-24	Adopting Annual Schedule of Meetings 2024
Resolution No. 033-24	Appointing Part Time Finance Assistant

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Jiang to approve the Consent Agenda

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Fox, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Nays: None

Open to the Public

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Councilmember Marks and approved by all to open the meeting to the public.

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, the meeting was closed to the public with a motion offered by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Councilmember Jiang and approved by all.

Mayor’s Address

*Good afternoon friends,
 We assembled here today, January 1st, 2024, to complete the work of 2023 and to begin our work for 2024. I am honored to serve as your Mayor and thank the residents for trusting us with governing. Today, I want to thank our elected officials, volunteers, employees, professionals and residents. You are all integral to the success of Demarest. Today, on the first day of this promising year, I am honored to address you and to say thank you.*

First and foremost, I want to express my deepest appreciation for the hard work of this Council, the welcomed communications with our residents, the manner in which our residents have embraced change, our employees for working hard for all of us, our volunteers who work tirelessly, our professionals who guide us, and for your trust and confidence. We faced challenges together, made necessary changes supported one another, and emerged stronger as a community.

Looking back, we can take pride in the achievements and progress we've made as a town. I want to thank each and every one of you who contributed to these accomplishments, whether through volunteering, innovative ideas, or simply being a good neighbor.

As we enter the new year, let us carry forward the lessons we've learned and build upon our positive momentum. We are a town of diverse backgrounds, talents, and dreams. Let us continue to celebrate this diversity and embrace the opportunities it brings for growth and enrichment. This year, we will reach and pass more milestones. I am confident that together, as a united community, we will overcome any obstacle. Let us focus on collaboration, understanding, and empathy as we work towards achieving our common goals.

As your Mayor, I am committed to working tirelessly for the betterment of our community and I invite you all to join me in this endeavor.

Happy New Year, my friends! Together, let us make 2024 a year to remember. And, as always, please join me in hoping that for the immediate freedom of the hostages in Gaza, a lasting peace for the Israelis and Palestinians, peace for the people in Ukraine and people throughout the world.

Thank you.

A motion was made by Councilmember Jiang, seconded by Council President Slowikowski and approved by all to adjourn. The meeting was therefore adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Falkenstern
Acting Borough Clerk