

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
BOROUGH OF DEMAREST
WORK SESSION Minutes
May 11, 2026
7:30 PM**

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 inclusion of the date, time and place of this meeting in the annual schedule of meetings of this Governing Body. Such schedule of meetings was published as required by law and is posted at Borough Hall, on the Borough website and filed in the office of the Borough Clerk.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor Bernstein, Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Carmeli, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss

Absent: None

Also Present: Julie Falkenstern, Borough Administrator
Deena Rosendahl, Borough Attorney
Nick Chelius, Borough Engineer

Mayor Bernstein asked for a motion to suspend the regular order of business for the Council to address a vacancy on the Council.

The motion was made by Councilmember Collins and seconded by Councilmember Carmeli.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

Mayor Bernstein explained that Daryl Fox had tendered her resignation from the Council due to personal obligations.

Ms. Falkenstern confirmed that Mayor Bernstein, the elected Municipal Chair of the Demarest Democratic County Committee, had submitted a list of three names for consideration to fill the vacancy. She confirmed the names as Blake Chroman, Jill Chroman and David Jiang. Mayor Bernstein then recommended the Council choose David Jiang due to his recent service as a Councilmember.

Resolution 101-26 A Resolution to Make an Appointment to Fill a Council Vacancy

A motion was made by Council President Slowikowski and seconded by Councilmember Collins to choose David Jiang to fill the vacancy.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Carmeli, Councilmember Collins,
Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

Mayor Bernstein then administered the oath of office to David Jiang, and he took a seat on the dais.

Mayor Bernstein noted that Ms. Fox served as the Class III member of the Planning Board, and he asked for a nomination from the Council for a new **Class III** member of the **Planning Board** (a member of the Governing Body) to be chosen by the Governing Body.

Council President Slowikowski nominated Councilmember Jiang to serve as the Class III member of the Planning Board. The nomination was seconded by Councilmember Collins.

Ms. Falkenstern asked if there were any other nominations. There being no other nomination, a roll call was taken on Councilmember Jiang's nomination.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Carmeli, Councilmember Collins,
Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

ORDINANCE (INTRODUCTION):

ORDINANCE No. 1181-26 AN ORDINANCE BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST AMENDING THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REPEAL CHAPTER 96 FILMING, MOTION- PICTURE AND TELEVISION; TO ADOPT A NEW CHAPTER 96 FILMING, MOTION-PICTURE AND TELEVISION ORDINANCE

Councilmember Jiang made a motion to introduce on first reading by title Ordinance No.1181-26 and it be published as required by law with notice of Public Hearing to be held on June 8, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Carmeli, Councilmember Collins,
Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING (ADOPTION):

ORDINANCE NO. 1180-26 AN ORDINANCE BY THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST AMENDING THE BOROUGH OF DEMAREST CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REPEAL CHAPTER 175 ZONING ORDINANCE; TO ADOPT A NEW CHAPTER 175 ZONING ORDINANCE

A motion was made by Adam Collins and seconded by Councilmember Carmeli to open the Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 1180-26.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Carmeli, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

Mayor Bernstein asked if anyone wishes to be heard concerning adoption of this ordinance.

Speaker(s):

Tim Woods

Mr. Woods stated he is the Chair of the Planning Board and was a 20 year member of the zoning board. He spoke in favor of adopting this updated ordinance.

There being no other members of the public wishing to speak, Council President Slowikowski made a motion to close the Public Hearing on this ordinance and that it be adopted with notice of final passage to be published as required by law. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collins.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Council President Slowikowski, Councilmember Carmeli, Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Jiang, Councilmember Marks, Councilmember Reiss
Nays: None

After the vote, Councilmember Jiang commented that he is concerned that the new stricter ordinance could increase the workload for the busy planning board. Mayor Bernstein noted that while he doesn't share that concern, the Planning Board's Annual Report will help the Council decide if the ordinance is working as intended and suggest any revisions that may become necessary. He believes this newly adopted ordinance was necessary and thanked Daryl Fox, Tim Woods and the Borough staff for their collaborative efforts in drafting the new ordinance.

Work Session Discussion Items: **Engineering Report**

Mr. Chelius reviewed the monthly engineering report highlighting upcoming paving projects. He reported that though the compost site work was slowed down while the contractor works through some regulatory paperwork issues required by the DPW he expects the work to begin again next week.

BOE

Ms. Falkenstern reported to the Council that she received feedback from some residents concerned about possible pay to play issues around varsity sports at NVD. She advised the resident that this was an issue that needed to be addressed by the Athletic Director and Board of Education but was asked to make the Council aware of the concern. Additionally, she noted that Daryl Fox was the liaison between the Council, and the school so asked the Mayor to ensure that a new liaison was appointed so that they could follow up on this issue as appropriate. Mayor Bernstein asked if any of the Council wanted to volunteer for the assignment and Councilmember Carmeli stated that she believed since she has children in the school and is involved, she feels it would be an appropriate assignment for her. Mayor Bernstein thanked her for volunteering.

Consent Agenda

Mayor Bernstein asked if any member would like to have any resolution removed from the consent agenda and voted on separately. (*none*)

Mayor Bernstein asked if any member would like to abstain from voting on any resolution on the consent agenda. (*none*)

Consent Agenda:

Resolution No. 102-26	Release of Escrow
Resolution No. 103-26	Authorizing Payment #2 Gazebo Project
Resolution No. 104-26	Soil Moving – 40 Meadow St.
Resolution No. 105-26	Authorizing Riverside Cooperative Agreement
Resolution No. 106-26	Authorizing Construction Administration – 2026 Riverside Coop
Resolution No. 107-26	Extending Conditional Designation
Resolution No. 108-26	Payment of Bills

A motion was made by Councilmember Reiss and seconded by Council President Slowikowski to approve the consent agenda.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

Meeting Open to the Public

Councilmember Collins made a motion to open the meeting to the public. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Reiss and approved by all on a voice vote.

Mary Lynn Hamilton

Ms. Hamilton spoke about Daryl Fox's long tenured service to the Borough and the Mayor & Council thanked Ms. Hamilton for her words and agreed with the sentiment.

Ray Cwyinski

Mr. Cywinski asked if the Borough was planning a celebration for the 250th Anniversary of America. Mayor Bernstein said that the Borough was discussing an appropriate celebration and would share that information when available.

Noelle Tutunjian

Ms. Tutunjian asked when the ordinance would take effect. Ms. Falkenstern answered that it will be published on the Borough website tomorrow morning.

Closed Session Resolution 2026-003

Litigation Update

Negotiations

Councilmember Collins made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-003 to approve the convening of a closed session.

Roll Call:

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

Nays: None

The Council returned from closed session and Councilmember Collins made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Marks and approved by all on a voice vote. The meeting was therefore adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Falkenstern, RMC
Borough Clerk