

**WORK SESSION
OCTOBER 7, 2025**

In compliance with Chapter 231, OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT of the State of New Jersey, adequate notice has been given to all members of the Governing Body, the "Local Source" and the "Westfield Leader" the two newspapers designated to receive such notice. The notice is posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board.

Mayor Paul N. Mirabelli called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor Mirabelli, Councilman Dierkes, Councilman Matejek, Council President Pacifico, Councilman Rinaldo, Councilman Van Deusen, Councilwoman Wass, Administrator Mortimer and Attorney Post. Also present were Public Works Director Matthew DeAnna, Senior Coordinator Kim Moriak, CFO Justyna Diaz. Recreation Director Frank Masella, Borough Engineer Mike Disko and Police Chief Joseph Giannuzzi.

Discussion was held regarding updates from representatives from the water company. The representatives provided updates on infrastructure improvements to water mains, fire hydrants, and addressing water quality issues. The company has invested nearly \$8,000,000 in the last six months and plan to continue improvements. Residents have reported improved water quality.

Discussion was held regarding authorization to apply for Community Development Block Grant 52 which helps to fund the Senior Citizens Social Services Program. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding department appointments. The Recreation Director did not have any appointment names at the time of the meeting for fall staff. The appointments will include a school crossing guard. The proper resolution for the school crossing guard will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding authorization to appoint Douglas Callanan as a new Junior Auxiliary Member. His background check has cleared. The Deputy Fire Chief recommends the appointment. A motion for approval will take place at the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding pool renovation recommendation from the Recreation Committee. Three options for maintenance of the pool were discussed, including removal, repair, or replacement. The Recreation Committee shared that repairing the pool may not address underlying issues, while replacing the pool is estimated to be costly. Plans for a new pool include two pools (lap pool, zero-entry pool), and the addition of heaters. Before a decision on the pool is made, a cost estimate will be sought. The cost of the estimate will be \$7,700. A public referendum would need to take place, and tax increases may be necessary if the decision to move forward with a replacement is made.

Discussion was held regarding authorization to purchase four license plate reader cameras (LPR) for \$40,287.00 from the PEPPM Co-Op. The proper resolution authorizing the purchase will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding authorization to purchase a 2025 Chevy Tahoe for \$57,550.08 from the Morris County Co-Op. The vehicle will replace a high mileage F150 vehicle in the police fleet. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a bid recommendation from the Borough Engineer for Contract 2025-5 Resurfacing of Chapel Hill and Outlook Drive West. The Engineer recommends the base bid and alternate #1 be awarded to the lowest bidder Midwest Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$476,751.87. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding sewer utility reductions and cancellations for several commercial properties. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the Governor's best practices inventory questionnaire. The inventory is designed to provide standards by which local government officials can assess how we are conducting business as compared to other towns to find cost effective ways of providing services. Municipalities need to meet an established percentage of the checklist items to receive some or all of their state aid payment. The borough received an overall score of 36.50 entitling Mountainside to 100% of the allotted aid.

Discussion was held regarding joining the Bergen County Co-Op. This will allow the Borough to enter into a cooperative pricing agreement for the purchases of goods and services without the need to bid usually with a cost savings to the borough. Discussion was held on the possibility of also joining the Somerset County Co-Op. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding a settlement for a reverse tax appeal. Attorney Post discussed the increase in assessed value for 1054 Route 22 for 2025-2027. A resolution approving the stipulation of settlement will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding the cancellation of receivable balances that exist in the records of the borough and will not be spent. The balances are from the NJ Green Acres Grant in the amount of \$478,000 and the Municipal Alliance Grant for \$71.88. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding department refunds. The recreation department would like to refund the participants due to cancellations. The proper resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding E-Bike safety. The increase in E-Bike accidents has caused concern across the country. There are currently no age or licensing restrictions to ride certain E-Bikes. Police Chief Gianuzzi discussed that a safety video will be created, county wide, that will be distributed to all schools. Currently, Union County has banned the usage of E-Bikes in all their parks. The borough will consider adopting their own regulations.

Discussion was held regarding an extended overnight parking request. A resident on Nottingham Way has requested overnight street parking for three months to account for a large dumpster being placed in their driveway for construction. A site visit to assess space and make a recommendation will be made by Police Chief Giannuzzi.

Discussion was held regarding proposed health screenings for seniors. Concerns regarding the involvement of a for-profit agency were brought up, with concerns focused on the company charging seniors should their insurance not cover costs of screenings. The council agreed to not move forward with this service.

Discussion was held regarding a request for a permit waiver. The company hired to install the sprinkler system at the proposed corner park on Mountain Avenue is requesting a permit waiver. The council approved the request.

Discussion was held regarding Union County request to install a camera on Summit Road. The benefits and approval process for the camera installation were brought up. The installation of the camera will work to have an impact on crime prevention and will assist law enforcement in investigations.

Discussion was held regarding the formation of a committee for the 250th USA Anniversary. The suggestion to create a committee to organize activities in celebration for the anniversary was made. The council discussed potentially involving volunteer residents in the committee.

Discussion was held regarding a COVID Expansion Permit from Public House. The Council does not object to the issuance of this permit and therefore, no action is needed.

Discussion was held regarding a request to put a stop sign at the corner of Old Tote Road and Knollwood Road. The Borough Police Chief suggests that a stop sign should be put on Knollwood, alongside a white line could help lineate the road and decrease safety concerns. Council agreed to move forward with the installation of a stop sign and the addition of white lines.

Discussion was held regarding the need for candy donations for the Halloween Celebration on Old Tote Road. Mayor Mirabelli, expressed the need for the Borough to do a better job at collecting donations for distribution during Halloween. Volunteers for candy distribution are also needed.

BILLS & CLAIMS:

The following resolution was introduced by Councilman Dierkes and seconded by Councilwoman Pacifico:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Mountainside that the following bills of the persons named and for the amounts stated below, having been duly audited and found to be correct this 7th day of October 2025, the same be paid after Council's review, if and when funds are available and that the Mayor, Council President, Administrator and Treasurer are hereby authorized and directed to sign and deliver warrants for same in the amount of \$303,487.30 (Copy of bill list attached).

Roll call: Ayes: Dierkes, Matejek, Pacifico, Rinaldo, Van Deusen, Wass. Nays: 0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Jim Hewitt, 1351 Wood Valley Road, requested an update on the status of the review of his proposal (submitted in March 2025) pertaining to the Borough’s land use ordinance. Attorney John Post shared that the internal review has not been completed but is estimated that it will be completed at the end of the week. Attorney Post and Mr. Hewitt will meet and discuss findings. A report will be issued by Attorney Post to the council after the review is completed.

The following resolution was introduced by Councilwoman Pacifico and seconded by Councilman Matejek.

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey permits the public to be excluded from certain matters to be discussed by the Governing Body; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council desire to discuss personnel and contracts which are matters where the exclusion of the public is permitted; and

WHEREAS, public disclosure of the results of this discussion will be made as soon as the matters discussed have been resolved by the Governing Body of the Borough of Mountainside;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Mountainside that the aforesaid matters shall be discussed in closed session upon adoption of this resolution.

Meeting adjourned to closed session at 9:01 P.M.

The meeting was recalled to public session.

Upon a motion by Councilman Matejek and a second by Councilwoman Pacifico, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:07 P.M.

Martha Lopez, RMC