



MINUTES

Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council
Wednesday, May 28, 2025
7:00 PM

To view the Mayor & Council meeting via livestream, please access the YouTube link which is posted on the Northvale website, www.northvalenj.org. Go to government tab, then to meeting livestreams.

Mayor McGuire called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers at 116 Paris Avenue, Northvale, New Jersey 07647.

Mayor McGuire read the Open Public Meetings Act Notice into the record as follows:

“This is a Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale. The date, time and location of this meeting have been advertised in the official Newspapers of the Borough, filed with the Municipal Clerk, and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building. All notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been fulfilled. Please note the fire exits as required by law at public meetings.”

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Mayor McGuire asked everyone to stand and join him in a salute to the flag led by Molly McMorro. He also asked everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence for Stepan Bakalian who passed away this weekend and was laid to rest today.

Mayor McGuire asked for roll call:

Mayor McGuire	Present	Councilwoman McMorro	Present
Councilman Bakalian	Present	Councilman Mattessich	Present
Councilwoman Fernandez	Present	Councilman Menafr	Present
		Councilman Sokoloski	Absent

Other Officials Present:

Kenneth Ralph, Borough Attorney
Joseph Luppino, Chief Financial Officer
Frances Weston, Municipal Clerk

Mayor McGuire announced that this is the introduction of the 2025 Municipal budget. The public hearing will be held on June 26, 2025. The meeting was turned over to the Chief Financial Officer Joseph Luppino to explain the budget.

Mr. Luppino started with the fund balance which is built up every year. This year there was more revenue allocated. Our strategy was to be conservative with revenues and watch spending. The fund balance in 2021 was \$547,693, 2022 was \$937,235, 2023 was \$1,418,073 and in 2024 was \$1,665,025. Having higher fund balances helps us with our rating. A better rating means we pay less in interest. For the 2025 budget, we are using \$700,000 of the fund balance as revenue. Our goal in 2025 is to generate more revenue. At the end of the year, we cancel appropriations not used and it goes into the fund balance. Our tax collection rate is very good. Mr. Luppino then discussed the appropriations. The health benefits went up and are projected to increase 30% next year. Pension was okay this year, went down \$34,000. The Mayor will be looking into other plans for health insurance. Garbage had an 8.4% increase. Library went up 14.93%. We are looking to allocate legitimate costs to the Library. Debt service down payments are up a little. There has been a reduction in grants this year. The only new grant is the DOT grant. Appropriations are down \$200,000 for this budget. We are using \$145,000 more surplus this year to help absorb the increases. We are budgeting \$185,000 for interest since the rates are coming down. We lost the municipal relief fund state grant. The grants do not impact the tax levy. The American Recovery Act was used last year. We received it 4 years ago and it expired in 2024. Last year we used the money for the sale of property from a few years ago. The levy is going up \$491,000. The main driver is \$221,000 loss revenue. Garbage increase was \$74,000, health insurance \$107,000 and Library was \$56,000. The Borough collects the levies for the county, schools, and the municipality. The County budget levy is increasing approximately \$2.8MM. The Northvale school levy amount is \$11,753,852 and the regional school levy amount is \$5,906,217. The



municipal levy for 2025 is \$8,509,580 and the Library levy is \$431,123 which brings the total of all levies to \$29,406,989. The total increase of all levies is \$960,159. For a home assessed at \$450,000, the total tax would be \$14,821.78. The local monthly increase is \$34.00. The municipal yearly increase is \$225.52 which amounts to \$18/month. The introduced budget will be submitted to the state. If approved, the public hearing will be held on June 26th.

Mayor McGuire stated that we went over this a few times to see if there were ways to trim it.

Councilman Mattessich said we had a good fund balance since 2021. It helped us out and this is a good strategy. He further said we need to discuss the health insurance for next year. Mayor McGuire stated he has a couple of plans to look at. There are 45% of the municipalities that opted out of the state plan. This year is the end of the 3 year contract for the garbage. Years 4 and 5 are option years. We will have to sit down with Interstate Waste Services.

Mayor McGuire asked for a motion and second for the introduction on first reading of Ordinance #25-10. Motion was moved by Council President McMorrow, seconded by Councilman Bakalian.

ORDINANCE #25-10

ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK FOR CY 2025 (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A: 4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget up to 2.5% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.15a provides that a municipality may, when authorized by ordinance, appropriate the difference between the amount of its actual final appropriation and the 3.5% percentage rate as an exception to its final appropriations in either of the next two succeeding years; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale in the County of Bergen find it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2025 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale hereby determines that a **1.00 % increase** in the budget for said year, amounting to **\$82,178.64** in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap Law, is advisable and necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale hereby determines that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale, in the County of Bergen, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2025 budget year, the final appropriations of the Borough of Northvale shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A: 4-45.14, be increased by 1.00%, amounting to **\$82,178.64** , and that the CY 2025 municipal budget for the Borough of Northvale be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that any amount authorized hereinabove that is not appropriated as part of the final budget shall be retained as an exception to final appropriation in either of the next two succeeding years; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance as introduced be filed with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services within 5 days of introduction; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that a certified copy of this ordinance upon adoption, with the recorded vote included thereon, be filed with said Director within 5 days after such adoption.



Mayor McGuire asked for a roll call vote:

Councilman Bakalian	Yes	Council President McMorrow	Yes
Councilwoman Fernandez	Yes	Councilman Menafra	Yes
Councilman Mattessich	Yes	Councilman Sokoloski	Absent

Mayor McGuire asked for a motion and second for Resolution #2025-91. Motion was moved by Councilman Mattessich, seconded by Councilman Menafra.

RESOLUTION #2025-91

TITLE: INTRODUCTION OF THE 2025 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following statement of revenue and appropriation attached hereto constitute the local budget of the Borough of Northvale, County of Bergen, New Jersey for the year 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said budget is to be published in the Record in the issue of June 1, 2025, and that a hearing on the Budget will be held at the Municipal Complex on June 26, 2025 at 7:00 PM or as soon thereafter as the matter may be reached.

Revenue and Appropriation Summaries – Anticipated

Summary of Revenues	2025	2024
1. Surplus	\$ 700,000.00	\$ 555,000.00
2. Total Miscellaneous Revenues	1,695,998.00	2,607,734.45
3. Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	295,000.00	300,000
4. a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes	8,509,580.41	8,018,223.17
b) Addition to Local District School Tax		
c) Minimum Library Tax	431,123.00	375,123.00
Total Amount to be Raised by Taxes for Municipal	\$8,940,703.41	\$8,393,346.17
Total General Revenues	\$11,611,701.41	11,856,080.62
Summary of Appropriations		
1. Operating Expenses: Salaries & Wages	\$3,873,600.00	\$3,658,900.00
Other Expenses	5,100,355.00	5,553,671.45
2. Statutory Expenses & Other Appropriations	1,160,881.00	1,169,487.87
3. Capital Improvements	60,000.00	30,000.00
4. Debt Service	976,500.00	932,768.00
5. Deferred Charges	121,916.00	150,916.00
6. Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	318,449.00	360,337.08
Total General Appropriations	11,611,701.41	\$11,856,080.62

Mayor McGuire opened the meeting to the public.

Ken Cho, 423 Rockland Avenue – asked if fund balance is the same as reserve. Mr. Luppino replied fund balance is also called surplus. Mr. Cho also asked if the reserve is equal to fund balance.

Chris Bombino, 123 Rockland Avenue – asked what the American Recovery Act was and why did it expire. He also stated a significant portion of the revenue dropped. He was glad the appropriations went down. He further stated that there should have been a better plan for this knowing the American Recovery funds were going to expire.

Mayor McGuire asked for a roll call vote:

Councilman Bakalian	Yes	Council President McMorrow	Yes
Councilwoman Fernandez	Yes	Councilman Menafra	Yes
Councilman Mattessich	Yes	Councilman Sokoloski	Absent



RESOLUTIONS – Consent Agenda –

“All items are considered to be non-controversial by the Council and will be approved by one motion. There may be further discussion prior to the vote upon request of a member of the public or a Council member. Any item may be removed for further discussion or for a roll call vote in which case the item will be removed and considered in its normal sequence as part of the general order of business”.

Mayor McGuire asked for a motion and second to approve Consent Agenda Resolutions #2025-92 through 2025-94. Motion was moved by Councilman Bakalian, seconded by Councilwoman Fernandez.

RESOLUTION #2025-92

TITLE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MAYOR MCGUIRE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH NEGLIA GROUP FOR SERVICES RELATING TO THE BOROUGH’S AFFORDABLE HOUSING OBLIGATIONS AND THE PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH ROUND HOUSING ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE PLAN

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has put forth the Borough’s Fourth Round of Affordable Housing obligations; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has until June 30, 2025 for the Planning Board to adopt a Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and for the Governing Body to endorse it; and

WHEREAS, Neglia Group submitted a proposal to the Borough, dated October 24, 2024, for these services; and

WHEREAS, at this time, the Borough needs to engage Neglia Group for Phase Three of its proposal on a time/hourly basis in a sum not to exceed \$36,500 for these services; and

WHEREAS, the Borough may use a portion of its Affordable Housing Trust Fund for this purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Mayor McGuire is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Neglia Group for Phase Three of its proposal.

RESOLUTION #2025-93

TITLE: RESOLUTION CORRECTING BILLS LISTS APPROVED ON MAY 14, 2025

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2025, the Governing Body approved a resolution (2025-88) included a payment of \$12,798.76 for final payment to D&L Paving Contractors; and

WHEREAS, the Bills List approved on May 14, 2025 included this item on it for payment but incorrectly noted the amount as \$4,988.16 as the amount had changed after the publication of the Bills List; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council wish to correct the Bills List approved on May 14, 2025.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale, Bergen County, New Jersey, that the contract for the Wildwood Road West and Scharer Avenue Improvements, which was constructed by D&L Paving Contractors, Inc., 675 Franklin Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey in accordance with the plans and specifications, as directed by the Borough Engineer is complete. The said construction is hereby accepted and final payment in the amount of twelve thousand, seven hundred ninety-eight dollars and seventy-six cents (\$12,798.76) is hereby approved, and the Bills List approved on May 14, 2025 is hereby corrected to reflect the payment of \$12,798.76.



RESOLUTION #2025-94

TITLE: PAYMENT OF BILLS

WHEREAS, claims have been submitted to the Borough of Northvale in the following amounts under various funds of the borough:

Current Fund Appropriations (2024)	
Current Fund Appropriations (2025)	\$9,098.48
General Capital Fund	\$26,950.00
Grant Fund	
Animal Trust	
Police DEA Trust	\$1,429.80
Escrow Trust	
Affordable Housing Trust	
Recreation Trust	\$380.52
Donation Trust Account	
Summer Recreation Trust	
SUBTOTAL	
Retro Current Fund (2025)	
	\$37,858.80

WHEREAS, above claims have been listed and summarized in the Bills List Report, and the corresponding vouchers have been reviewed and approved by the department head, finance committee, and/or the chief financial officer; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has determined that the funds have been properly appropriated for such purposes and are available in the Borough of Northvale, and that the claims specified following examination and approval by the finance committee, be paid and checks issued; accordingly, and

WHEREAS, claims have already been paid in the following amounts for the purposes specified below during the course of the year:

Northern Valley Regional High School		
Payroll – Salaries & Wages		
Payroll- Salaries & Wages		
Health Benefits		
County Taxes		
Employee Pension Payment- PERS/PFRS		
Northvale Board OF Education Northern Valley Regional High School District		
Northvale Public Library		
Capital – Inter-fund		
DTC- Bond Principal & Inter		
DTC- Bond Interest		
TOTAL		



NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Northvale that the claims totaling **\$37,858.80** are ratified respectively.

Mayor McGuire opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on the Consent Agenda Resolutions. There being no questions or comments, Mayor McGuire closed the meeting to the public.

Mayor McGuire asked for a roll call vote:

Councilman Bakalian	Yes	Council President McMorrow	Yes
Councilwoman Fernandez	Yes	Councilman Menafra	Yes
Councilman Mattessich	Yes	Councilman Sokoloski	Absent

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor McGuire asked for a motion and second to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 PM. Motion was moved by Councilman Menafra, seconded by Councilman Bakalian. All were in favor to adjourn.

Joseph E. McGuire
Mayor

ATTEST:

Frances M. Weston
Frances M. Weston
Municipal Clerk

Approved: June 11, 2025