

BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

MINUTES OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

REORGANIZATION MEETING

January 1, 2025

PRESENT: Mayor John Coiro, presiding, Councilman Louis D'Angelo, Councilman William Bucher, Councilman John Capo, Councilman Sanders Reynoso, Municipal Clerk Joseph Wassel and Municipal Attorney Kristin Corrado.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor John Coiro called the meeting to order and asked the Municipal Clerk to call the roll.

Municipal Clerk Joseph Wassel announced that at the General Election held on November 5, 2024, Anthony Picarelli and Patrick Fierro were elected to the Council of the Borough of Totowa.

Mayor Coiro asked Councilman Louis D'Angelo to escort Councilman Elect Anthony Picarelli and Councilman Sanders Reynoso to escort Councilman Elect Patrick Fierro to the dais so that the Oath of Allegiance and Office could be administered.

Mayor Coiro administered the Oath of Allegiance and Office to Councilman Elect Picarelli with his wife Jamie holding the Bible and daughter Rosie by his side and Councilman Elect Fierro with his mom Cindy holding the Bible and dad Nick by his side.

Badges symbolic to the Office of Council were presented to Councilman Picarelli and Councilman Fierro by Mayor Coiro.

Mayor Coiro congratulated Councilman Picarelli and Councilman Fierro and welcomed them to the Council. The rest of the Council, the Borough Clerk and Borough Attorney also offered congratulations.

Councilman Picarelli wished everyone a Happy New Year, then thanked Chairman Peter Murphy, Mayor Coiro, the Council, his parents, late father-in law, mother-in-law, and his wife Jamie for all of her support and everyone in the room for their support.

Councilman Fierro wished everyone a Happy New Year, then thanked Chairman Murphy, Vice Chairman Brendan Murphy, the Mayor and Council, his parents and all the residents for all their support.

Mayor Coiro welcomed the guests and citizens to the annual Reorganization Meeting of the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Coiro announced that the Reorganization Meeting of the 2025 Borough Council was now in session.

Mayor Coiro asked the Municipal Clerk to call the roll of the 2025 Borough Council.

PRESENT: Mayor John Coiro, presiding, Councilman Louis D'Angelo, Councilman Anthony Picarelli, Councilman William Bucher, Councilman John Capo, Councilman Patrick Fierro and Councilman Sanders Reynoso.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor Coiro asked everyone to stand and offer a moment of silence for former President Jimmy Carter who passed away recently.

Mayor Coiro asked Father Marc Mancini to give the invocation.

Mayor Coiro asked everyone to join the Mayor and Council in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The following Statement of the Meeting as required by New Jersey Statutes was read by the Municipal Clerk:

This meeting of the Mayor and Council held on this First Day of January, 2025, is being held in accordance with the Annual Notice of the Schedule of Meetings as required by Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 of the State of New Jersey, as amended. The agenda for this meeting has been prepared and distributed to the Mayor and Council and a copy has been on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk.

Mayor Coiro called for the election of Council President for the 2025 Borough Council.

Councilman Picarelli nominated Councilman Louis D'Angelo for the position of Council President for the year 2025, seconded by Councilman Bucher.

There being no further nominations, there was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman Bucher that Councilman D'Angelo be elected as Council President for the year 2025. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

Mayor Coiro announced that Councilman Louis D'Angelo has been elected as Council President of the Borough of Totowa for the year 2025.

Mayor Coiro announced that Councilman Anthony Picarelli will present the following resolutions to the Governing Body for their consideration and adoption.

RESOLUTION NO. 01-2025

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa, that the By-Laws of the Borough Council amended January 1, 2025 are hereby adopted by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa for the Year 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all proceedings of the Council not controlled by the provisions of these By-Laws shall be regulated by Robert's Rules of Order.

RESOLUTION NO. 02-2025

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the Public Laws of 1975, Chapter 231, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa must set forth in annual notice a schedule of its meetings for the Year 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa, that this Council shall meet during the Year 2025 for its regular meetings, in the Council Chamber on the second floor in the Municipal Complex, 537 Totowa Road at Cherba Place, at 7:30 p.m., in accordance with the following schedule:

January 14 & 28
February 11 & 25
March 11 & 25
April 8 & 22
May 13 & 27
June 24

July 8 & 22
August 12 & 26
September 9 & 23
October 14 & 28
November 11 & 25
December 9 & 23

Reorganization Meeting: January 1, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this annual notice be filed in the Office of the Municipal Clerk, that it be posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Complex and be transmitted to The Herald News, The Record and The Passaic Valley Today Paper.

RESOLUTION NO. 03-2025

WHEREAS, P.L. 1983, Chapter 8, Local Fiscal Affairs Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:5-2, has been amended to require that each municipality designate a Cash Management Plan for the deposit of each local unit's monies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following Cash Management Plan of the Borough of Totowa be and is hereby adopted.

A. DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL DEPOSITORIES:

The following financial institutions are designated official depositories:

1. JP MORGAN CHASE
NORTH JERSEY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
PROVIDENT BANK
TD BANK NA
UNITY BANK
VALLEY BANK
WELLS FARGO BANK

2. Designated official depositories are required to submit to the Chief Financial Officer of the Borough of Totowa a copy of the State of New Jersey, Department of Banking, Governmental Unit Deposit Protection Act Notification of eligibility, which must be filed semiannually in the Department of Banking as of June 30th and December 31st of each year. Said Notices must be available for annual audit.
3. Designated official depositories are required to submit to the Chief Financial Officer a copy of institution's "Annual Report" on an annual basis.

B. DEPOSIT OF FUNDS:

All funds shall be deposited within Forty-Eight (48) hours of receipt in accordance with State statute.

1. Opening funds shall be deposited into interest bearing accounts to maximize interest earnings.
2. Capital and Debt service funds may be deposited into interest bearing accounts. Non-interest bearing accounts shall be regularly monitored for the availability of funds for investment.
3. Trust funds may be deposited into interest bearing accounts in accordance with the State statutes regulating the deposit of developer's escrow deposits. Non-interest bearing accounts should be regularly monitored for availability of funds for investment except where either State or Federal laws prohibit the earning of interest on such funds.
4. Payroll and agency remittance funds shall be maintained in regular checking accounts, only insofar as they serve to compensate the bank for payroll data processing services.

C. DEFINITION OF ALLOWABLE INVESTMENT INSTRUMENTS:

The Borough may permit deposits and investments in such depositories as permitted in Section 4 of P.L. 1970, Chapter 236 (C.17:9-44) and other instruments specified below:

1. United States Treasury Bills (T-Bills)
2. Borough of Totowa Bonds or Notes
3. Commercial Bank Deposits and Certificates of Deposit (CD's)
4. Repurchase Agreements (Repo's)
5. Investments in Savings and Loan Association
6. United States Government Agency and Instrumentality Obligations
7. State of New Jersey Cash Management Fund
8. School District Obligations

D. DEFINITION OF ACCEPTABLE COLLATERAL AND PROTECTION OF BOROUGH ASSETS:

1. All designated depositories must conform to all applicable State statutes concerning depositories of Public Funds.
2. All depositories shall obtain the highest amount possible F.D.I.C. and/or F.S.L.I.C. coverage of all Borough Assets (Demand and Certificate of Deposit).
3. Collateral will be required for all deposits and investments of the Borough, except for those in the State Cash Management Fund, collateral must have a market value of not less than 100 percent of all deposits and investments.
4. For pledges by depositories on Borough Funds, the following securities will be considered acceptable for pledges:
 - a. Any security backed by the U.S. Government.
 - b. Any direct obligation of any taxing authority within the Borough of Totowa.
 - c. Real Estate Mortgage Loans for Real Estate property located within the Totowa market area. Pledges of Real Estate Mortgage Loans shall be maintained at a market value of 115 percent of deposits.
 - d. All pledges of collateral must be indicated on an advice copy of the investment instrument which shall be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer or Treasurer.

E. COMPENSATING BALANCE AGREEMENTS:

Where compensating balances are used to offset bank expenses, an agreement between the bank and the Borough shall be executed, specifying the charge for each service. Said agreement shall be reviewed annually.

F. REPORTING PROCEDURES:

The Chief Financial Officer shall prepare for the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa the following investment reports:

1. MONTHLY REPORTING: A detailed listing of all investments purchased in the prior month, specifying the amount, interest percent per annum, number of days, period of investment and maturity date, interest amount at maturity and financial institutions with which investment is placed. This report shall be broken down by fund.
2. QUARTERLY REPORTING: A detailed summary analysis of all investments by fund, specifying the quarterly interest rate earned, quarterly interest earned on NOW and Savings Accounts and Year-To-Date total interest earnings.
3. The Treasurer shall prepare a schedule of outstanding investments for the independent auditors as of December 31st of each year and at other such times as required by the auditors.
4. The Treasurer shall also periodically provide analysis of average daily balances in interest bearing checking accounts vs. other investment vehicle potential.
5. All such reports may include a comparison of current investment income vs. forecast, prior year or market conditions.

G. DIVERSIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer shall closely examine investments to guard against the effects of a financial institution going into default. This may be accomplished through the practice of spreading the investments around in various designated official depositories.

H. MAXIMUM MATURITY POLICY:

Investments shall be limited to a maturity not to exceed one year on all operating funds unless a longer maturity is permitted within the provision of regulation promulgated by either the Federal or State Governments.

I. INVESTMENT PROCEDURES:

Bids for Certificates of Deposit and Repurchase Agreements will be solicited of at least three (3) designated depositories only if the amount is \$100,000 or greater.

Telephone bids will be solicited of designated depositories by the Chief Financial Officer or Treasurer or designated staff member.

The depository shall specify the principal amount of the investment bid on, interest rate and number of days used to calculate the interest to be paid upon maturity.

Interest paid shall be from the date the bid was awarded to the date of maturity.

All bidders may request the results of the bid after the bid is formally awarded.

A check or wire transfer of funds will be made available to the winning bidder on the same business day the bid is awarded.

Each quotation shall be documented to record the date and time of quote, the parties in the discussion, the instrument(s), maturities and rates. A bid form of the Borough may be used.

J. RETURN ON INVESTMENT:

Where the return on a proposed investment does not exceed the cost of making said investment by a minimum amount the Chief Financial Officer and/or Treasurer will not make the investment. The Chief Financial Officer and/or Treasurer shall have the discretion to award an investment to the bank wherein the funds reside, should that bank's quoted rate be less than other quoted rates received in the event that the differential in interest rates is less than 25 basis points, and providing that the term of the investment is less than fifteen (15) days.

K. CONTROLS:

When possible, the internal controls should provide for a separation of the investment placement functions and the accounting activity. Controls must be designed for telephone orders, wire transfers and securities safekeeping. Only specifically designated personnel shall be allowed to conduct this part of the transactions, and all activity should be subject to immediate written confirmation by the designated depository. The Treasurer shall review each day's activity.

L. BONDING:

The following officials shall be covered by surety bonds; said surety bonds to be examined by the independent auditor to insure their proper execution:

Collector
Municipal Court Administrator
Deputy Municipal Court Administrator
Municipal Court Judge

Staff members of the Department of Finance not covered by separate surety bonds shall be covered by a Public Employee's Faithful Performance Bond in the minimum amount of \$50,000.00.

M. COMPLIANCE:

The Cash Management Plan of the Borough of Totowa shall be subject to the annual audit conducted pursuant to N.J.S. 40A:5-4.

N. The official charged with the custody of the monies of the Borough of Totowa shall deposit them as designated by the Cash Management Plan and shall thereafter be relieved of any liability or loss of such monies due to the insolvency or closing of any depository designated in the Cash Management Plan pursuant to N.J.S. 40A:5-2.

O. Where a conflict exists between this Cash Management Plan and State statute, the applicable State statute shall apply.

P. The Cash Management Plan shall be subject to the approval of the Borough Attorney.

RESOLUTION NO. 04-2025

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Mayor, Borough Clerk and the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer be hereby designated as the Official Signatories to sign all checks.

RESOLUTION NO. 05-2025

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Tax Collector of the Borough of Totowa be named and designated as the Official Tax Search Officer of the Borough of Totowa.

RESOLUTION NO. 06-2025

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Borough Clerk is hereby named and designated as the Official of the Borough of Totowa, to make Official Certificates of Searches as to Municipal Improvements authorized by Ordinances of the Borough of Totowa.

RESOLUTION NO. 07-2025

WHEREAS, it is necessary to have a person responsible for processing all documents pertaining to the Public Employees Retirement System of the State of New Jersey.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Borough Clerk is hereby named and designated as the Supervisor Certifying Officer for documents pertaining to the Public Employees Retirement System.

RESOLUTION NO. 08-2025

WHEREAS, it is necessary to have a person responsible for processing all documents pertaining to the Police and Fireman's Retirement System of the State of New Jersey.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Borough Clerk is hereby named and designated as the Supervisor Certifying Officer for documents pertaining to the Police and Fireman's Retirement System.

RESOLUTION NO. 09-2025

WHEREAS, it is necessary to have a person responsible for the processing of all Social Security Records.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer of the Borough of Totowa be named and designated as the Official in charge of Social Security Records.

RESOLUTION NO. 10-2025

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Borough Clerk is hereby named and designated as the Official of the Borough of Totowa, to issue Official Certificates certifying whether or not a sub-division of lands has been recommended by the Planning Board and approved by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa.

RESOLUTION NO. 11-2025

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa must establish the interest rate for the delinquent taxes for the year 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized and directed to charge interest on delinquent taxes and assessment accounts as follows:

First 10 days of Tax Payments	No Penalty
Thereafter from the due date of Tax Payments for the 1st \$1,500.	8%
Thereafter, the balance in excess of \$1,500.	18%

And in addition to, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:4-67 as amended, the following schedule shall apply:

Up to \$1,500. delinquency	8%
Over \$1,500. delinquency	18%
Additional penalty for a delinquency over \$10,000. if not paid prior to the end of the calendar year.	6%

RESOLUTION NO. 12-2025

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa must establish the interest rate for the delinquent water bills for the year 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Water Registrar is hereby authorized and directed to charge interest on delinquent water accounts as follows:

First 30 days of Water Payments	No Penalty
Thereafter from the due date of Water Payments for the 1st \$1,500.	8%

Thereafter, the balance in excess of \$1,500. 18%

And in addition to, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 54:4-67 as amended, the following schedule shall apply:

Up to \$1,500. delinquency 8%

Over \$1,500. delinquency 18%

Additional penalty for a delinquency over \$10,000. if not paid prior to the end of the calendar year. 6%

RESOLUTION NO. 13-2025

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that appointments of officers and employees, contracts and authorizations for services which were performed during the year 2024 and previously approved, be and are hereby ratified by the Mayor and Council for the Year 2025.

RESOLUTION NO. 14-2025

WHEREAS, there is a need to designate the Official Signatories for Municipal Court General Account and Bail Account Checks.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that the Municipal Court Judge and Court Administrator be hereby designated as the Official Signatories to sign all Municipal Court General Account and Bail Account Checks.

RESOLUTION NO. 15-2025

RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF TOTOWA DESIGNATING A PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Division of Contract Compliance and Equal Employment Opportunity in Public Contracts ("Division of Contract Compliance") is charged with enforcing the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 provides that no public contract can be awarded nor any monies paid until the prospective contractor has agreed to comply with the approved Affirmative Action Plan; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.5, all New Jersey Public Agencies and Municipalities are required to annually designate a Public Agency Compliance Officer ("P.A.C.O.") and submit the name of the P.A.C.O. to the Division of Contract Compliance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa that Joseph Wassel, RMC, Municipal Clerk, is hereby designated as the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the Borough of Totowa.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Division of Contract Compliance.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-2025

AUTHORIZING AND ADOPTING A STANDARD TORT CLAIM NOTICE FORM

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa is a member of the New Jersey Intergovernmental Insurance Fund ("NJIF"); and

WHEREAS, the "NJIF" and the Borough of Totowa have determined that it is reasonable and necessary to develop a standard form and procedure by which persons are required to notify the Borough of Totowa of claims which arise under the authority of N.J.S.A. 59:1-1, et seq. ("Tort Claims Act").

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa hereby adopts the Tort Claim Notice Form in the format attached hereto.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-2025

Resolution to introduce and adopt the 2025 Temporary Budget of the Borough of Totowa.

There was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman D'Angelo that the foregoing resolutions be adopted. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

There was a motion by Councilman Picarelli, seconded by Councilman D'Angelo to approve Resolution No. 2025-01 for the payment of bills. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

Mayor Coiro made the following appointments with the advice and consent of the Council for the year 2025 or for the term appointed.

APPOINTMENTS

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>TERM/ YEARS</u>	<u>APPOINTED</u>
Deputy Municipal Clerk	1	Kathryn Wasilewski
Municipal Attorney	1	Kristin M. Corrado
Tax Appeal Attorney	1	Reddin Masri
Tax Appeal Consultant	1	Appraisal Consultants Corp.
Municipal Auditor	1	Lerch, Vinci & Bliss
Municipal Engineer	1	Alaimo Group-Consulting Engineers
Municipal Planner	1	
Risk Management Consultant	1	Strategic Insurance Partners
Bond Counsel	1	
Special Counsel	1	
Grant Writer	1	Millennium Strategies
Affordable Housing Administrative Agent	1	Community Grants, Planning & Housing
Veteran Affordable Housing Administrator	1	
Insurance Commissioner	1	Joseph Wassel
Insurance Commissioner (Alternate)	1	John Waryas
Municipal Housing Liaison	1	Judith Wright
Licensed Water Operator	1	Michael Paese
Licensed Sewer Operator	1	Bernard Sivik
Department of Public Works Foreman	1	Sean Yennie
Water Registrar	1	Jennifer Bernardo
Deputy Water Registrar	1	John Waryas
Prosecutor	1	Jared Drill
Substitute Prosecutor	1	Scott Fahrney
Prosecutor's Assistant	1	Colby Bierach
Public Defender	1	Ramsey Merhi
Substitute Public Defender	1	Raymond B. Reddin
Court Administrator	1	Christina Fattal
Deputy Court Administrator	1	Irine Upritchard
Violations Clerk	1	Keri Giacchi
Police Dispatcher	1	Carl Baker
Police Dispatcher	1	Daniel Urban

Police Dispatcher	1	Vincent E. Marciano
Police Dispatcher	1	
First Aid Director	1	Matthew Barbieri
Police & Fire Mechanic	1	Fred Dell'Aquila
Fire Official	1	Richard Schopperth
Fire Inspector	1	Mark Henry
Fire Inspector	1	Vincent A. Marciano
Emergency Management Coordinator	3	Gary Bierach
Construction Official	1	Allan Burghardt
Building Sub-Code Official	1	Allan Burghardt
Zoning Official	1	Allan Burghardt
Code Enforcement Officer	1	Allan Burghardt
Flood Plain Administrator	1	Allan Burghardt
Zoning Officer	1	John Waryas
Zoning Inspector	1	James Booth
Deputy Zoning Officer	1	Ernie Bavazzano
Deputy Zoning Officer	1	Giovanni D'Ambrosio
Deputy Zoning Officer	1	Peter Campilango
Property Maintenance Inspector	1	James Booth
Property Maintenance Inspector	1	Giovanni D'Ambrosio
Plumbing Sub-Code Official	1	Raymond Keeley
Electrical Sub-Code Official	1	Vincent A. Marciano
Fire Sub-Code Official	1	Richard Schopperth
Projects Manager	1	John Waryas
Housing Officer	1	Allan Burghardt
Housing Officer	1	James Booth
Board of Assessments	1	Kevin Hanrahan
Board of Assessments	1	Brendan Mulligan
Board of Assessments	1	Matthew Munson
Board of Adjustment	4	John Krautheim, Jr.
Board of Adjustment	4	Brian Nash
Board of Adjustment (Alt. 1)	2	Mary DeNude
Board of Health	4	Maureen Britting
Board of Health	4	Rosemarie Aulino
Board of Health	1 (Unexp)	Judith Wright
Library Board	5	Robert W. Coyle
Library Board	2 (Unexp)	
Library (Mayor's Alternate)	1	Sanders Reynoso
Parking Utility Commission	5	Amy Coiro
Parking Utility Commission	3 (Unexp)	Daniel Sagan
Flood Control Board	1	William Bucher, Jr.
Flood Control Board	1	James Niland
Flood Control Board	1	Philip Puglise
Flood Control Board	1	Amy Coiro

Flood Control Board (Mayor's Designee)	1	Anthony Zarek
School Crossing Guard	1	Ariana Adili
School Crossing Guard	1	Renee Adili
School Crossing Guard	1	Lauri Cato
School Crossing Guard	1	Terrence Maguire
School Crossing Guard	1	Stephanie Masi
School Crossing Guard	1	Danielle Matthaei
School Crossing Guard	1	Philip Meyer
School Crossing Guard	1	Karin Sciacca
School Crossing Guard	1	Denise Tillie
School Crossing Guard	1	Sarah Tillie
School Crossing Guard	1	Leticia Valentin
School Crossing Guard	1	Pauline Vander Berg
School Crossing Guard	1	Frances Vogt
Physician & Surgeon	1	Joseph Vitale
Physician & Surgeon	1	Francis Ferrante
Physician & Surgeon	1	John Ambrose
Physician & Surgeon	1	Marzena Odorczyk
Physician & Surgeon	1	Scott Coleman
Physician & Surgeon	1	Francesco Lima
Chaplain	1	Fr. Marc Mancini
Chaplain	1	Fr. Joseph Mactal
Chaplain	1	Rev. Teresita Matos-Post

For each of the aforementioned appointments, there was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to confirm the appointments. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative. For Risk Management Consultant Councilman Reynoso abstained from the voting on this appointment.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Borough Attorney. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 18-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR
PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES FOR 2025

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa requires the services of an attorney to serve as the Municipal Attorney for the Borough of Totowa and represent the interests of the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the professional services to be provided by the Municipal Attorney include but are not limited to attending all meetings of the Mayor and Council and Committee meetings as required; preparing Resolutions, Ordinances and contracts; reviewing documents as requested; and performing all general legal services as needed; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional legal services in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for the Position of Municipal Attorney for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Finance and Administration Committee did examine all proposals for professional legal services; and

WHEREAS, Kristin M. Corrado, Esq., Corrado & Corrado, Esqs., 142 Totowa Road, Suite 2, Totowa, New Jersey 07512, has submitted a proposal to provide the professional legal services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, Kristin M. Corrado, Esq., possesses the necessary experience and expertise to provide the professional legal services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate Kristin M. Corrado, Esq. in accordance with the Fee Schedule set forth in her proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional legal services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Kristin M. Corrado, Esq., Corrado & Corrado, Esqs., to serve as the Borough of Totowa Municipal Attorney and provide professional legal services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Tax Appeal Attorney. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 19-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR
PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES FOR 2025 TAX APPEALS

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa requires the services of an attorney to serve as Special Tax Counsel for the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the professional services to be provided by the Tax Attorney include but are not limited to defending against all tax appeals filed against the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional legal services in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for the Position of Tax Attorney for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Finance and Administration Committee did examine all proposals for professional legal services; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Reddin, Esq., Reddin Masri, LLC, 485 Totowa Road, Totowa, New Jersey 07512, has submitted a proposal to provide the professional legal services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Reddin, Esq. possesses the necessary experience and expertise to provide the professional legal services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate Raymond Reddin, Esq. in accordance with the Fee Schedule set forth in his proposal not to exceed the sum of \$15,000.00; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional legal services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Raymond Reddin, Esq., Reddin Masri, LLC, to serve as the Borough of Totowa Tax Attorney and provide professional legal services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Tax Appeal Consultant. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 20-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL TAX APPEAL AND CONSULTING SERVICES

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa desire to retain the services of a professional real estate appraisal and consulting firm on an as-needed basis in order to prepare and defend against the various tax appeals filed against the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, these professional services include but are not limited to the physical inspection of each property, verification of zoning and development approvals, preparation of appraisals, attendance at conferences and depositions and providing expert witness testimony at each trial as needed; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional tax appeal and consulting in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for the Position of Tax Appeal Consultant for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Finance and Administration Committee did examine all proposals received for professional real estate appraisal and consulting firm services; and

WHEREAS, Appraisal Consultants Corp., 14 Cullen Drive, West Orange, New Jersey 07052, has submitted a proposal to provide the required appraisal and consulting services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Appraisal Consultants Corp. possesses the necessary expertise and experience to perform the professional real estate and consulting services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate Appraisal Consultants Corp. in accordance with the Fee Schedule set forth in the proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional legal services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize a contract with Appraisal Consultants Corp. to provide professional real estate appraisal and consulting services on an as-needed basis in order to prepare and defend against the various tax appeals filed against the Borough of Totowa.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Borough Auditor. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL AUDITING SERVICES FOR 2025

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa desire to retain the services of a professional accounting firm to serve as the Municipal Auditor for the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the professional services to be provided by the Municipal Auditor include but are not limited to auditing the financial statements for the Borough of Totowa; preparing the unaudited annual financial statement; review and certification of the annual budget; and preparing the annual debt statement and performing all general auditing services as needed; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional auditing services in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for the Position of Municipal Auditor for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Finance and Administration Committee did examine all proposals for professional auditing services; and

WHEREAS, Lerch, Vinci & Bliss, LLP, a New Jersey Limited Liability Partnership having its principal place of business at 17-17 Route 208, Fair Lawn, New Jersey 07410, has submitted a proposal to provide the required auditing services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Lerch, Vinci & Bliss, LLP possesses the necessary experience and expertise to perform the professional auditing services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate Lerch, Vinci & Bliss, LLP in accordance with their proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional auditing services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Lerch, Vinci & Bliss, LLP to serve as the Borough of Totowa Municipal Auditor and provide professional auditing services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Borough Engineer. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 22-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR 2025

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa desire to retain the services of a professional engineering firm to serve as the Municipal Engineer for the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the professional services to be provided by the Municipal Engineer include but are not limited to attending meetings of the Mayor and Council, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment as required; preparing plans, designs and specifications for all public works and improvement projects; reviewing all subdivision, site plan and variance applications; and performing all general engineering services as needed; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional engineering services in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for the Position of Municipal Engineer for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Engineering and Public Property Committee did examine all proposals for professional engineering services; and

WHEREAS, Alaimo Group Consulting Engineers, a New Jersey Corporation having its principal place of business at 200 High Street, Mt. Holly, New Jersey 08060, has submitted a proposal and Fee Schedule to provide the required engineering services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Alaimo Group Consulting Engineers possesses the necessary experience and expertise to perform the professional engineering services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate Alaimo Group Consulting Engineers in accordance with the Fee Schedule set forth in their proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional engineering services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Alaimo Group Consulting Engineers to serve as the Borough of Totowa Municipal Engineer and provide professional engineering services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Risk Management Consultant. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative. Councilman Reynoso abstained from the voting.

RESOLUTION NO. 23-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR RISK MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR 2025

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa desire to retain the services of a licensed firm to serve as the Risk Management Consultant for the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the professional services to be provided for the Borough of Totowa by the Risk Management Consultant include but are not limited to identifying its insurable exposures, selecting the various coverage's, reviewing Certificates of Insurance from contractors, vendors and professionals and assisting with the settlement of claims as needed; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional risk management services in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for Risk Management Consultant Services for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Finance and Administration Committee did examine all proposals for professional Risk Management Consultant services; and

WHEREAS, Strategic Insurance Partners, 492 Franklin Avenue, Nutley, New Jersey 07110, has submitted a proposal to provide the grant writing and alternative financial consulting services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Strategic Insurance Partners possesses the necessary experience and expertise to perform the professional Risk Management Consulting services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate, Strategic Insurance Partners in accordance with their proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional Risk Management Consultant services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Strategic Insurance Partners to serve as the Borough of Totowa Risk Management Consultant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Grant Writer. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL GRANT WRITING SERVICES FOR 2025

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa desire the services of a professional grant writing firm to assist the Borough of Totowa with securing federal and state appropriations, grant procurement and alternative funding methodologies; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa did advertise for receipt of sealed proposals for the professional grant writing services in accordance with its specifications entitled "Request for Proposals for the Position of Municipal Grant Writer for the Borough of Totowa"; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Finance and Administration Committee did examine all proposals for professional grant writing services; and

WHEREAS, Millennium Strategies LLC, 60 Columbia Road, Building B, Suite 230, Morristown, New Jersey 07960, has submitted a proposal to provide the grant writing and alternative financial consulting services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Millennium Strategies LLC possesses the necessary experience and expertise to perform the professional grant writing services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate, Millennium Strategies LLC in accordance with their proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional grant writing services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Millennium Strategies LLC to serve as the Borough of Totowa Municipal Grant Writer and provide professional grant writing services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

There was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli to adopt the following professional resolution for the Affordable Housing Administrative Agent. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-2025

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT FOR THE BOROUGH OF TOTOWA

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa has petitioned the Superior Court of New Jersey for a Declaratory Judgment that its adopted Housing Element and Fair Share Plan is compliant with its constitutional obligation to provide its fair share of the regional need for very-low, low, and moderate-income housing; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa's adopted Housing Element and Fair Share Plan will result in the creation of housing units affordable to and intended for occupancy solely by qualified very-low, low, and moderate-income households; and

WHEREAS, the Administrative Agent shall assist the Borough of Totowa with complying with the State of New Jersey's affordable housing regulations in the areas of income qualifications, affordable rents and sale prices and affirmative marketing plans; and

WHEREAS, these comprehensive Affordable Housing services may only be provided by an individual or firm that has been certified by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa solicited proposals from firms qualified to serve as the Affordable Housing Administrative Agent for the Borough of Totowa; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Totowa did receive proposals at its Municipal Building on December 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Community Grants, Planning & Housing, 1249 South River Road, Suite 301, Cranbury, New Jersey 08512 has submitted a proposal to provide the required professional services, a copy of which is on file in the office of the Borough of Totowa Municipal Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the firm of Community Grants, Planning & Housing possesses the necessary experience and expertise to provide the professional administrative services; and

WHEREAS, for providing the required services, the Borough of Totowa will compensate Community Grants, Planning & Housing in accordance with the Fee Schedule set forth in their proposal; and

WHEREAS, the term of this contract shall be for a period of one year commencing on January 1, 2025 and terminating on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the professional affordable housing administrative agent services shall be awarded as a fair and open contract pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.4 et seq.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Totowa do hereby authorize the Borough of Totowa to enter into a contract with Community Grants, Planning & Housing to serve as the Affordable Housing Administrative Agent to the Borough of Totowa and provide professional services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Municipal Council of the Borough of Totowa does hereby authorize the Mayor and Municipal Clerk to execute any and all necessary instruments relating thereto.

The following appointments were made by Mayor Coiro and do not require Council consent or confirmation:

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>TERM/ YEARS</u>	<u>APPOINTED</u>
Planning Board Class IV	4	Angelo Coiro
Planning Board Class IV	4	Anthony Sabatino
Planning Board Class IV (Alt. 1)	2	Alan Schell
Planning Board Class III	1	Louis D'Angelo
Planning Board Class II	1	James Niland
Board of Recreation	5	Michael Pascucci
Shade Tree Commission	5	Norman Makoujy
Senior Citizen Coordinator	1	Maria Murphy

Mayor Coiro announced the following Council Committees for the year 2025. The first Councilman listed is the Chair of that Committee.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

PICARELLI	D'ANGELO	CAPO
Auditor	Budgetary Control	Insurance
Assessor	Tax Collector	Treasury
Legal	Garbage	Municipal Court
Uniform Construction Code		Street Lighting

PUBLIC SAFETY

D'ANGELO	CAPO	BUCHER
Police	Fire	First Aid
Dog License		Uniform Fire Code

PUBLIC WORKS

BUCHER	FIERRO	D'ANGELO
Roads	Storm Drainage Flood Control	Water

ENGINEERING & PUBLIC PROPERTY

CAPO	REYNOSO	PICARELLI
Engineering	Sewer	All Public Property

LIAISON & INSPECTION

REYNOSO	BUCHER	FIERRO
Board of Health Library Shade Tree	Recreation Planning Board	Swimming Pool Board of Adjustment Local Assistance Board

LEGISLATIVE & ORDINANCES

FIERRO	PICARELLI	REYNOSO
Ordinances	Legislation	Licenses

Mayor Coiro asked Father Marc Mancini to give the benediction.

Mayor Coiro gave his annual New Year's State of the Borough Address and Message to the Citizens of the Borough of Totowa.

Dear Fellow Residents,

As I do each New Year's Day, I would like to review some of the events and accomplishments that took place in our town during the past year and to announce some of the plans we have for 2025. First, I'd like to welcome back Anthony Picarelli and Patrick Fierro to the Council and congratulate them on their recent election victory. They are our youngest members of Council. Anthony was first elected as a Councilman in 2012. He has chaired several committees over the years and presently is the chair of the Finance Committee. Patrick was first elected in 2021 and chairs our Legislation and Ordinances Committee. You heard from each of them earlier. I know that both Anthony and Patrick will work hard throughout the year for our residents. They will be involved in many of our town's operations. I rely on their counsel and advice, along with the entire Council and Joe and Kristin, in making decisions for Totowa. I know you can count on them to serve you well.

Beginning with community events and recreation, in June 2024, our Totowa Day townwide celebration moved to the PAL complex. We again drew a record number of residents for the occasion. Residents were treated with music, many varieties of food, amusements and

bouncy houses, a hot dog eating contest, and a star-studded wrestling match to end the festivities.

Our summer concerts on the front lawn of the municipal building were well attended. We had a few new performers to complement some returning musicians. During the summer months, we held camp for our youth and our town pool again enjoyed a record number of members. There were special events at the pool that attracted many residents and a new park with playground equipment was installed at the pool in 2024 and added more activities for our younger members. The cost of the park was funded by a grant that the Borough received. In 2024, we applied for and received a grant from the State of New Jersey to install safety surfacing at the park on Floyd Drive. While the grant will not cover the entire cost of the installation, the Borough will pay for the remaining cost of the improvements.

In November, we held our annual 5K Turkey Trot with a record number of participants- over 1,000 in all. And through the generosity of participants, 120 turkeys were donated and given to a women's shelter. Our two blood drives held in 2024 collected much needed blood donations. The fire truck parade with the Totowa, West Paterson, and Little Falls Fire departments was also held again and the number of trucks in the parade reached over 280. The toys collected by our volunteer firefighters surpassed the prior year totals and were donated to children at St. Joseph's Hospital. We also held our annual tree lighting ceremony with the school choir and musicians. And our trolley carrying residents singing carols could be heard in the streets. There were other events throughout the year, such as the car show, bunny breakfast, Trunk or Treat and more, both inside and out of doors, that our residents enjoyed.

With respect to our infrastructure, we received a grant from the NJ Department of Transportation in 2023 for the entire length of Battle Ridge Trail and a portion of Columbus Ave. With our own funding, we also paved Vita Road and Willow Court. These roads were all paved this past October. In 2024, we received a grant from the DOT to pave Duffus Ave., Mair Ave., Sandra Drive, and other smaller streets in Echo Glen. As I reported last year, Totowa applied for and received a grant from the State of New Jersey to replace all of the trash cans and planters along Union Boulevard. The new trash and recycling receptacles were installed in 2024 and the new planters should be installed in 2025.

We applied for another grant from Passaic County to continue relining our sanitary sewers. Our most recent award is for the entire length of Willard Avenue, which will begin in 2025. We also completed the relining of the sewer lines on Lincoln Ave. from Union Boulevard to Totowa Road. We have applied for two more streets in 2025. These efforts will help alleviate some of the infiltration that enters our sanitary sewer system. We are nearly complete with the project to replace the pumps and infrastructure at the William Place pump house. We are ready to go to bid on the upgrades to the Riverview Drive pump station and are awaiting notification of a grant that we applied for to help defray some of the costs of this project. We will continue looking at ways to improve our water and sewer system while alleviating flooding to our residents. During the soaking rainstorms about a

year ago in late January, the check valves we installed near Lincoln Ave. at the Passaic River several years ago worked as designed and the flooding in that part of town was not as significant as compared to other major water events.

Real estate development continued in Totowa in 2024. We are pleased that developers and retailers have confidence in our borough and consider it a desirable location. In 2024, the planning board approved applications for Tesla and LIDL at the old Marshalls and Bed, Bath and Beyond locations, which should open in 2025. New restaurants have opened in town as well as new businesses coming into our industrial park. And Union Boulevard continues to get a makeover. The additional ratables from this type of project mentioned and other construction taking place should provide ratables and ease the tax burden on our residents.

Totowa continues to be strengthened by the support of our professional staff at town hall, our police department, our Department of Public Works, and all of our dedicated employees. We are fortunate and thankful for our volunteers in our town. Our fire fighters and first aid squad members are vital to our community as they give up their time to serve selflessly for you, our residents, in your time of need. There are also volunteers at the PAL and on our municipal boards who donate their time in the best interest of our community and all of these efforts are truly appreciated by the Council and me.

Our Totowa Public Library continues to flourish with new and expanded programs offered as well as assistance to our senior citizens and residents in need. A program that the Council started in 2022- honoring our Totowa veterans along our main streets, is being administered by the Library staff. If you have not visited the library lately, you will be surprised at how many events are run there. Under the direction of the Library Board of Trustees and its director, Anne Krautheim, the library has become more than a library- it truly is our community center.

One issue that we must address in 2025 is the affordable housing mandate by the State of New Jersey. Due to a law that was signed in March, the Department of Community Affairs has determined that Totowa must commit to building 528 affordable housing units in the next ten years, which means developers can build five times that amount of market rate units, or approximately 2,500 units altogether. As you know, Totowa is only 4 square miles and has less than 20 acres of developable vacant land scattered throughout our town. Yet we were given the second highest quota in Passaic County. Therefore, in order to protect our community from this disastrous mandate, we have entered into a lawsuit with about 30 other towns in NJ to challenge this law. Concurrently, we are working with our planners, engineer, and attorney to reduce our mandated goal should the lawsuit not be successful. More to come on this.

On the property tax front, in 2024, our total tax rate did increase. This was attributable to several factors, including significant unfavorable tax increases from Passaic Valley High School and the County of Passaic. As you have heard me say countless times, we are

determined to be fiscally prudent. Just like you, we were not happy with the increases and will work to lessen the impact. In Totowa we have made tough financial decisions before and will continue to make tough choices in order not to place a financial burden on future budgets and future generations. We have now achieved our thirteenth consecutive year without any long-term debt in our municipality, a claim only a handful of municipalities across New Jersey can make. Our core belief is that we should pay currently to meet our obligations where we can and not borrow if possible. By freeing ourselves of debt, we can utilize those funds for much needed improvements to our infrastructure and replacing outdated equipment. In 2024, Totowa continues the distinction of having the lowest tax rate of the 16 municipalities in Passaic County. The Council and I will once again work hard to maintain the lowest tax rate for our residents.

Totowa has a rich history of volunteerism, low taxes, and caring neighbors who make our town feel like a community. I believe our future is a bright one and I am confident that we will continue our improvements to our town as well as our stability here in Totowa. On behalf of our Council members, I would like to wish everyone a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Thank you.

Mayor Coiro invited everyone in attendance to the Barnyard & Carriage House on behalf of the Republican Club/Party to enjoy some refreshments.

There being no further business to come before the Council, there was a motion by Councilman D'Angelo, seconded by Councilman Picarelli that the meeting be adjourned. The next regular Council Meeting will be held on January 14, 2025. On roll call vote, all members of the Council present voted in the affirmative.

Joseph Wassel, RMC
Municipal Clerk