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COUNTY OF BERGEN  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY  
PUBLIC MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025  
COMMENCING AT 7:04 P.M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- MARY J. AMOROSO, CHAIRWOMAN
- STEVEN A. TANELLI, VICE CHAIRMAN
- DR. JOAN M. VOSS, CHAIR PRO TEMPORE
- RAFAEL MARTE
- TRACY SILNA ZUR

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

- GERMAINE M. ORTIZ
- THOMAS J. SULLIVAN

KIM O. FURBACHER, C.C.R., R.D.R.  
P.O. BOX 213  
ROCHELLE PARK, NEW JERSEY 07662-0213  
201-336-6200

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ALSO PRESENT:

THOMAS J. DUCH, ESQUIRE  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR/COUNTY COUNSEL

ANTHONY IACONO  
DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

EDWARD J. FLORIO, ESQUIRE  
COUNSEL TO THE BOARD

LARA L. POLLITT  
CLERK TO THE BOARD

STEVEN SPOTO  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & POLICY

DR. HAROLD LERNER  
SUPERINTENDENT - BERGEN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

ANDREA SHERIDAN  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND  
SUPERVISION

RICHARD PANICUCCI  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF CURRICULUM AND  
INSTRUCTION

KIM O. FURBACHER, C.C.R., R.D.R.  
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I N D E X

PAGE NO.

Roll Call	5
Pledge of Allegiance	6
Moment of Silence	6
Presentation in Recognition of Career and Technical Education Month	7
Minutes	13
Hearing of the General Public	14
Review of Resolutions	29
Resolutions of Unanimous Consent	29
Resolutions of Nonconsent (None)	
Ordinances	30
Committee Reports from Commissioners	31
Adjournment	39

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HEARING OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Julie O'Connor	15
Paula Rogovin	17
Richard Jones	21
Stephen Maricoda	22
Chris Nowell	24
Pat DiRoma	26

1 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: The meeting is  
2 called to order at 7:04 p.m.

3 Before we begin our meeting, I ask that  
4 everyone please take a moment to silence your phones.

5 Thank you.

6 Will Madam Clerk please read the Sen.  
7 Byron Baer Open Public Meetings Act.

8 CLERK POLLITT: In accordance with  
9 Section 5 of the Sen. Byron Baer Open Public Meetings  
10 Act, adequate notice of this meeting has been  
11 provided in the Annual Notice Schedule, which  
12 contained the time, date, and location of this  
13 meeting, copies of which Notices were forwarded to  
14 the official County newspapers, to wit: The Herald  
15 News and The Record, and a copy of which was posted  
16 on the bulletin board in the Bergen County Justice  
17 Center and Administration Building, One Bergen County  
18 Plaza, Hackensack, New Jersey, and filed with the  
19 Office of the Bergen County Clerk.

20 Roll Call

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Will the Clerk  
22 please call the roll.

23 (At this point in the proceeding roll  
24 call is taken with Commissioners Marte, Voss, Silna  
25 Zur, Vice Chairman Tanelli, and Chairwoman Amoroso

1 present, with Commissioners Ortiz and Sullivan  
2 absent.)

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Evidence of a  
4 quorum is present.

5 Pledge of Allegiance

6 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Will you please  
7 join me for the Pledge of Allegiance.

8 Please remain standing for our Moment  
9 of Silence after.

10 (At this point in the proceeding, all  
11 rise for a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.)

12 Moment of Silence

13 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Please remain  
14 standing.

15 Tonight we will take a moment to honor  
16 the lives of those we have recently lost, individuals  
17 who dedicated themselves to service, community, and  
18 family.

19 Bergen County Sheriff's Officer  
20 Sgt. Michael Ramos was a true public servant. His  
21 legacy will be remembered for his dedication to law  
22 enforcement and public safety.

23 Helen "Shell" Beese was a devoted wife,  
24 mother, and community leader. Her work in Carlstadt  
25 touched countless lives.

1                   Nathaniel Simmons, a National Guard  
2 veteran, dedicated mason, and community mentor, left  
3 an enduring impact. He was a man of faith,  
4 leadership, and service.

5                   Councilman Adam Gussen served Teaneck  
6 with dedication. As a councilman, deputy mayor, and  
7 advocate, he worked to strengthen his community.

8                   Ridgefield Park Officer Steven  
9 Fernandez, an openly gay officer, notably served as  
10 the department's LGBTQ+ liaison, protecting and  
11 serving his community.

12                   We also mourn the tragic loss of those  
13 aboard American Airlines Flight 5342 and the U.S.  
14 Army Black Hawk helicopter. New Jersey resident  
15 Christine Lane and her teen son, Spencer, who was a  
16 skating sensation, were among those lost.

17                   We honor all of those who have left us  
18 too soon. Their kindness, service, and love remain  
19 in our hearts. Let us now observe a moment of  
20 silence in their memory.

21                   (Whereupon, a Moment of Silence is  
22 observed.)

23                   CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

24                   Presentation in Recognition of Career and Technical  
25                   Education Month

1                   CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Tonight we proudly  
2 recognize Career and Technical Education Month and  
3 welcome Dr. Lerner from the Bergen County Technical  
4 School District as we celebrate his team's dedication  
5 to preparing students for success in high-demand  
6 careers.

7                   Bergen Tech's educators,  
8 administrators, and students are shaping the future  
9 workforce through hands-on learning, industry  
10 partnerships, and real-world training. Their  
11 programs in health care, engineering, IT, culinary  
12 arts, and skilled trades provide students with the  
13 skills and certifications needed to thrive.

14                   On behalf of the Bergen County Board of  
15 Commissioners, we thank Bergen Tech for its  
16 unwavering commitment to career readiness, workforce  
17 development, and educating good kids.

18                   Before we present our proclamation to  
19 the Bergen County Technical Schools District in  
20 recognition of their impact on our community, would  
21 anyone from the Board like to speak?

22                   Yes.

23                   COMMISSIONER VOSS: Well, you know how  
24 I feel about education, it's the most important thing  
25 in the world. I am so happy that here in Bergen

1 County, we have schools that are focusing on careers  
2 that are going to be in great demand.

3 Dr. Lerner, I want to thank you and the  
4 rest of the people who are affiliated with the county  
5 schools. God bless you, keep up the good work, and  
6 never, never retire.

7 [LAUGHTER]

8 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: It's not allowed.  
9 Yes, Steve.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN TANELLI: I just want to  
11 echo Commissioner Voss' comments. We are so  
12 fortunate to have you and your staff leading the way.

13 Tracy and I have been here for 12 years  
14 now, and it seems like every year, we come up with a  
15 new, creative way of educating and making sure that  
16 our students are getting the best out of what we can  
17 offer them, and that's really a tribute to you guys.  
18 Sometimes we scratch our head and think how is that  
19 program going to possibly work, and we go see it,  
20 it's unbelievable, it flourishes. We constantly have  
21 kids at the top of all the competitions nationwide.  
22 We're constantly rated in the top. And that's a  
23 credit to all your hard work and we can't thank you  
24 enough.

25 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: And just to

1 add also, not only do we have kids at the top of all  
2 these lists, we have kids in our office, interns,  
3 making a difference every single day. We have kids  
4 who are engaged and partnering with us. Whenever I  
5 seem to have an idea of something else we can do, you  
6 are willing to roll up your sleeves and figure out  
7 how we can incorporate that, whether it's  
8 Canstruction or Souper Bowl, or the cookbook. I can  
9 go on and on of the things we have partnered together  
10 to accomplish, it's really the lasting fingerprint  
11 that you leave on our kids that empower them to be  
12 the leaders of our future and set in motion this  
13 lifelong love of learning with good, solid mental  
14 health at the core of it and you prioritize that  
15 every step of the way, but you are continually  
16 innovating to meet the jobs of the future and how  
17 people are going to process information in the  
18 future. Every time we go through a budget hearing,  
19 it is always the most important dollars that we  
20 allocate every single year are to make sure that our  
21 kids have the opportunity that you are providing. So  
22 thank you for your partnership, your leadership, and  
23 your dedication.

24 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We love and honor  
25 all of the work that you do and we are just in awe of

1 the students you turn out who get these remarkable  
2 awards for projects we can barely understand.

3 [LAUGHTER]

4 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: They're so good.  
5 If you would like to say a few words,  
6 Dr. Lerner.

7 DR. LERNER: Thank you. Thank you,  
8 Commissioner Chair and all the Commissioners. It's a  
9 pleasure to be here.

10 First, I do want to introduce and  
11 recognize my right and my left hands. Andrea  
12 Sheridan is my Assistant Superintendent of  
13 Administration and Supervision and Rich Panicucci is  
14 my Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and  
15 Instruction. When I started here 19 years ago, we  
16 had three high schools, we now have five, going on to  
17 the sixth. We have a huge curriculum department, who  
18 takes care of everything related to instruction, but  
19 you have to do the day-to-day operations of that many  
20 schools. Ms. Sheridan oversees all our principals  
21 and they report to her. We meet weekly to oversee  
22 what's happening, but also to think what else are we  
23 going to do in the future. And it is this body, this  
24 Board of Commissioners, who have supported us every  
25 step of the way. Every time we have been here, we

1 have received exactly what we need and more, and  
2 that's how we are able to continue to produce these  
3 schools with CTE programs that I think we're up with,  
4 the new one is going to be about 39 different  
5 programs that students in Bergen County can choose  
6 from and they have a choice to say, hey, I want to do  
7 something in career and technical education, and we  
8 have it, from traditional trades all the way to  
9 trades that take somebody into a medical field or  
10 engineering field. So we're hitting the entire  
11 population of students in Bergen County and that's  
12 what I think we're the most proud of. So thank you  
13 for the honor.

14 I appreciate not only our  
15 administration, our teachers, our students, our  
16 parents, it's a family, Bergen County Technical  
17 Schools, and we look at it that way every single day.

18 So thank you all. I really appreciate  
19 it.

20 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Of course we have  
21 a commendation for you. We'll come down.

22 Just to read one line of this.

23 Whereas, the Bergen County Board of  
24 Commissioners recognizes the outstanding  
25 contributions of the Bergen County Technical School

1 District in preparing students to high wage, high  
2 skilled careers that drive economic growth and  
3 community success.

4 Therefore, the Bergen County Board of  
5 Commissioners does hereby recognize February 2025 as  
6 "Career and Technical Education Month."

7 (Whereupon, the presentation is made.)

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 Minutes

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Will the  
11 Clerk please read the minutes to be accepted.

12 CLERK POLLITT: The minutes to be  
13 accepted are:

14 December 4th - Work and Public Session;  
15 Commissioner Marte absent.

16 December 18th - Sine Die; all present.

17 January 2nd, 2025 - Reorganization; all  
18 present.

19 January 15, 2025 - Work Session and  
20 Public Session; Commissioner Zur absent.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: May I have a  
22 motion to accept the minutes?

23 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: So moved.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN TANELLI: Second.

25 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: All in favor?

1 (All present Commissioners respond in  
2 the affirmative.)

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Unanimously  
6 approved.

7 Hearing of the General Public

8 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: I now move we open  
9 the Commissioners meeting to the general public.

10 Do I hear a second?

11 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Second.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: All in favor?

13 (All present Commissioners respond in  
14 the affirmative.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Unanimously  
18 approved.

19 We will now have the Hearing of the  
20 General Public, with a three-minute time limit in  
21 effect, in accordance with Bergen County Commissioner  
22 bylaws.

23 For those members of the public who  
24 would like to participate during the public comment,  
25 please fill out a sheet to be recognized. There's

1 the sheet (indicating).

2 Would the counselor please explain the  
3 process by which the public will be recognized.

4 MR. FLORIO: Thank you, Chairwoman.

5 If you have filled out a sheet and  
6 you're recognized by the Chair to speak, please come  
7 to the podium, state your name, spell your last name.  
8 I'll let you know when your three minutes have expired.

9 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. First,  
10 Julie O'Connor.

11 MS. O'CONNOR: Julie O'Connor,  
12 O-'-C-O-N-N-O-R.

13 Hello, Chairwoman.

14 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Hello.

15 MS. O'CONNOR: Hi, Commissioners.

16 Thank you for giving me the time.

17 So I'm here today in support of  
18 Assemblywoman Shama Haider's bill. She had a family  
19 emergency, that's why she couldn't be here herself as  
20 well, but I support it wholeheartedly. Her bill is  
21 to have humane pet stores which don't allow the sale  
22 of dogs, cats, and rabbits, but rather encourage them  
23 to work with local rescues to help them adopt out  
24 animals in need.

25 The problem with pet stores that sell

1 animals is most of the time they're almost  
2 exclusively sourced from puppy mills. Puppy mills  
3 are a very cruel industry, it's mostly a dog issue,  
4 but you find it in cats and rabbits too, where the  
5 mother dogs are just kept in cages very far away,  
6 states like Missouri, Kansas, and Western  
7 Pennsylvania, and they ship out puppies when they are  
8 even too young to be healthy. So a lot of times  
9 unsuspecting people will buy these puppies at a pet  
10 store and then later on they get very ill, spend  
11 thousands of dollars in medical bills, and the animal  
12 unfortunately ends up dying. As a mom myself, I  
13 think about the mother dogs who are in the cages and  
14 they keep breeding them and breeding them until  
15 they're of no use and they kill them. So the puppy  
16 mill industry is a very cruel industry. And at this  
17 point, eight other states have passed statewide bans,  
18 New York being the most recent. So New Jersey would  
19 be the ninth, and there is a bill to have it as a  
20 statewide ban. 149 local municipalities have passed  
21 this in our state and just in District 37, my town of  
22 Tenafly, Teaneck, Hackensack, Leonia, and Palisades  
23 Park, all have these local ordinances that prevent  
24 the sale of puppy mill dogs, and, like I say, cats  
25 and rabbits.



1 Climate Change Superfund Act, which would make the  
2 polluters pay. I understand, from talking to  
3 Commissioner Tanelli, that it will be on the agenda  
4 hopefully at the next meeting.

5 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Soon, yes.

6 MS. ROGOVIN: Soon?

7 Is there a way we can find out for  
8 sure, because there will be a rally and a lobbying  
9 day coming very soon in Trenton and we would like to  
10 be able to list the Commissioners as one of the  
11 groups that is supporting this legislation. We also  
12 think that it will help us get other members of the  
13 Senate and Assembly to sign onto it.

14 Just since I was here last time, Sen.  
15 Gordon Johnson signed on and then Assemblywomen Park  
16 and Haider, Assemblymen Clinton, Calabrese, and so  
17 on. If it would be possible to have it at the next  
18 meeting?

19 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. We'll call  
20 you and tell you. I just don't want to promise  
21 something if there is some issue that comes up,  
22 that's all.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN TANELLI: So finish your  
24 three minutes first. I don't want to take up your  
25 time.

1 MS. ROGOVIN: Okay. So there's so much  
2 going on, of course, in Washington, that is  
3 horrendous and horrific and evil, and one of the  
4 things is the proposed rollback. There's legislation  
5 in Congress to rollback the lead and copper rules for  
6 the pipes, lengthening the amount of time to replace  
7 pipes. It's just something that's really, really bad  
8 and especially bad for poor communities, where a lot  
9 of the piping is substandard. So what I'd like to  
10 ask is if there are specific things like this  
11 particular lead and copper rule where you would take  
12 a stand on it.

13 I know yesterday there were so many  
14 people and today and all over the country so many  
15 people at Democratic Party legislators' offices. We  
16 were at Booker's office yesterday, because we need  
17 him and all of you, all of you, to take a stand on  
18 many of these issues that are just so horrendous and  
19 we're seeing, when people do that, things are being  
20 rolled back. For example, the thing about Gaza,  
21 Rivera Gaza was already rolled back today. We were  
22 out protesting today on that, but we need you to take  
23 a stand, that's why you were elected. This is  
24 Fascism moving in on us and we need you. So if this  
25 is a mechanism for us to bring to your attention

1 specific things, like the lead and copper rule, is  
2 there a way we can get it to you so you will be able  
3 to speak out about it?

4 MR. FLORIO: Three minutes, Ms.  
5 Rogovin.

6 MS. ROGOVIN: Okay.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN TANELLI: Chairwoman,  
8 prior to the meeting I did tell Paula that we had a  
9 preliminary discussion for consideration for a future  
10 meeting.

11 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Yes. Right.

12 COMMISSIONER TANELLI: I didn't say it  
13 was definitively going on, but I did say we would  
14 consider it.

15 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We just don't want  
16 to promise what we're not going to deliver on a  
17 specific date, but we are happy to hear your voice.  
18 There's so much coming out of Washington, we can't  
19 keep up with it day by day by day.

20 MS. ROGOVIN: I have a meeting of the  
21 group that's working hard on this, the Food & Water  
22 Watch, and it is next Wednesday. And when I told  
23 them it would probably be on the agenda next week,  
24 they said, oh, well, we'll move our meeting.

25 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We'll talk. I'll

1 give you a call.

2 MS. ROGOVIN: Yes, as soon as possible.

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you, Paula.

4 Richard Jones.

5 MR. JONES: Good evening,

6 Commissioners. Thank you. Richard Jones. I'm from  
7 Maywood, J-O-N-E-S.

8 As a bit of background. I live in  
9 Maywood. I work in New York City. I usually commute  
10 to New York City by bicycle. And when I don't  
11 commute by bicycle, I commute by bus, so the topic of  
12 street safety is very important to me, especially  
13 people outside of motor vehicles.

14 I would like to encourage the Board to  
15 adopt a Complete Streets policy. A number of  
16 municipalities have done so, and Complete Streets and  
17 transportation networks for people outside of  
18 vehicles work best when they are truly networks where  
19 someone can get from Hackensack to Teaneck all the  
20 way through, rather than having just little bits  
21 together. And the county's participation in this is  
22 the glue to tie together all of the municipalities  
23 will be essential for improving street safety.

24 As a very anecdotal but my data point,  
25 so half of my commute is in Bergen County up to the

1 George Washington Bridge and the other half is over  
2 to Long Island City. Everybody hears my commute and  
3 they say, wow, you commute to New York City, and I  
4 say, no, I commute through Bergen County.

5 The Bergen County portion of my commute  
6 is significantly more dangerous, by a wide margin.  
7 It's not even close. Just to throw that out there.  
8 And I know we can do better and I know that with the  
9 resources, the NJTPA is working on Local Safety  
10 Action Plans. They're developing those for most of  
11 the counties in their region. They're working on one  
12 for Bergen County. When the results of that come  
13 back, I believe we will be in a good place for the  
14 Board and the county to take action and really  
15 improve street safety so that we can get more people  
16 out there and make it safer for everybody so that  
17 we're not as car dependent and save some money on  
18 maintenance and infrastructure as well.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

21 Stephen Maricoda.

22 MR. MARICODA: Steve Maricoda,

23 M-A-R-I-C-O-N-D-A. I live in Saddle Brook.

24 Thanks for allowing me to speak. I  
25 just wanted to bring up, because last year actually I

1 got the proclamation from you guys recognizing Dark  
2 Sky Week or Light Pollution Awareness Week. It's  
3 always in April around the new moon. And I just ask  
4 if we can actually renew this for this year, just for  
5 raising awareness about light pollution in the  
6 general community. I can send you guys an updated  
7 script too.

8                   And also I just wanted to thank -- I've  
9 been e-mailing Jim Tedesco regarding the parks, like  
10 the county parks, having better lighting in the parks  
11 to reduce light pollution in the parks. And actually  
12 a meeting was just set up next Thursday with, I  
13 forget her name, but at Overpeck Park. I just want  
14 to thank you guys about that.

15                   And also there's an upcoming Senate  
16 bill, New Jersey Senate 1610, about new state funded  
17 lighting projects having like fully shielded lights,  
18 that the light only shines where it's needed, not up  
19 into the sky or causing glare for drivers and  
20 pedestrians. There most likely would be a statewide  
21 proclamation, so I just wanted to put that on your  
22 radar.

23                   Anyway, thank you so much.

24                   CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Stephen, give your  
25 contact information to this Steven (indicating).

1 MR. MARICODA: Okay. Will do.

2 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Chris Nowell.

3 MR. NOWELL: Chris Nowell, Fort Lee,  
4 New Jersey.

5 Hi. Good evening.

6 So whether congestion pricing stays or  
7 goes or whether traffic continues to improve or gets  
8 worse, we should be encouraging people to take public  
9 transportation whenever practical and possible for  
10 the environment and health reasons that County  
11 Executive Tedesco has pointed out.

12 You know, there are claims that people  
13 are afraid to take public transit and that people may  
14 have fears about public transportation. A lot of  
15 that is because of the few, very rare, yet severe,  
16 incidents that have occurred that are just blown up  
17 by the media. So we have to be very careful not to  
18 perpetuate misconceptions and reinforce people's  
19 negative feelings about taking public transportation.

20 So I just want to present some facts  
21 anyway in the public interest. So in a report from  
22 last month on NYC.gov, 2024 was the second  
23 consecutive year index crime declined within the New  
24 York City subway system. And on VitalCityNYC.org,  
25 American drivers faced about a one in one million

1 risk of injury or death for every mile driven, which  
2 is roughly equal to the violent crime index from a  
3 single ride on the subway in 2023.

4 So we can say that driving is not more  
5 dangerous than taking the subway or taking the subway  
6 is not more dangerous than driving per se.

7 And that also results from the 2018  
8 National Institutes of Health study showed that the  
9 city bus is a safer mode than car for vehicle  
10 occupants but also cyclists and pedestrians traveling  
11 along these bus routes.

12 So unfortunately we learned the hard  
13 way recently that many people don't pay attention to  
14 facts or data, they rely on their feelings, and we  
15 understand that, but that's why it's important that  
16 we're careful not to perpetuate or validate  
17 misconceptions and we need to reassure the public  
18 that public transportation is at least as safe as  
19 driving and usually it's much more.

20 Once again, I urge you to pass a  
21 resolution in support of the New Jersey Climate  
22 Superfund Act in the state Legislature right now. As  
23 Paula was talking about, 24 legislators are currently  
24 co-sponsoring the bill, including Assemblywomen  
25 Haider and Park and Sen. Gordon Johnson.

1                   Paula and I were in the room last week  
2 talking with Sen. Johnson, and the next day he agreed  
3 to co-sponsor it. It's really as big of a no-brainer  
4 as you can get. Bergen County residents are  
5 desperately going to need New Jersey to raise revenue  
6 for client adaptation, resiliency in mitigation.  
7 Don't let taxpayers foot the bill after we already  
8 have been subsidizing the fossil fuel industry at  
9 \$20 billion per year. That's the whole country, not  
10 just Bergen County, but it's been going on for  
11 decades.

12                   MR. FLORIO: Three minutes, Mr. Nowell.

13                   MR. NOWELL: Okay. Thank you.

14                   CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: I wondered if you  
15 were speaking.

16                   Pat DiRoma.

17                   MR. DiROMA: Hi.

18                   Today I'd like to talk about an update  
19 on New York City's congestion pricing data. We're  
20 about a month in and so I just wanted to share some  
21 key data points.

22                   Travel times at major crossings into  
23 Manhattan are down, with most notable being the  
24 Holland Tunnel, which is down nearly 50 percent.  
25 Average weekdays in the congestion zone are seeing

1 490,000 vehicles, which reflects a nine percent  
2 decrease in the number of vehicles in the congestion  
3 zone when compared to the same time period over the  
4 last three years.

5           Subway ridership is up during the  
6 weekdays 7 percent and up during the weekends  
7 12 percent. And the LIRR is showing ridership that  
8 is at or above normal levels with some specific  
9 stations on the chart showing notable increases, like  
10 the MetroNorth showing an 11 percent increase.

11           Furthermore, there is new polling data  
12 showing a clear majority from New York voters of  
13 59 percent in support of allowing congestion pricing  
14 to stay in place.

15           On a personal note, I had the pleasure  
16 of going into New York City during congestion pricing  
17 recently and it is wonderful. It is so much calmer,  
18 it is so much quieter, so much more pleasant to walk  
19 around, bike around. It is nothing like trying to do  
20 the same thing on many Bergen County roads.

21           That is pretty much the extent of my  
22 prepared comments. Beyond that, I just kind of  
23 wanted to talk about where things are right now.

24           We are looking at a federal government  
25 that is freezing funds for Safe Streets for All

1 grants, and that is federal money that we've been  
2 advocating towns and counties to take and it seems  
3 like that might not be available going forward. So  
4 we are kind of at a point where we're going to need  
5 to rely more on our local and state governments now  
6 more than ever, and it's really important that our  
7 county be a place where residents can be as insulated  
8 as possible from the chaos that is coming out of  
9 Washington. We have a president threatening trade  
10 wars that will affect oil prices, that will affect  
11 all sorts of basic costs for the average resident.

12           The ability to walk and bike and get  
13 around without having to fill up a car with a bunch  
14 of gasoline that is going to cost God knows what in  
15 even a couple of months, let alone a couple of years,  
16 is something that is going to be really important and  
17 it's going to take a holistic approach and something  
18 that we really haven't thought enough of yet. The  
19 best time to do this was 20 years ago, the second  
20 best time to do that is now.

21           I just want to urge the county to start  
22 moving in the right direction on this. There are  
23 places around the world and places even near us, like  
24 New York and Hudson County, that have made great  
25 strides on this and it's really time that we follow

1 suit.

2 Thanks.

3 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

4 I move we close the hearing to the  
5 public.

6 Do I have a second?

7 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

8 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: All in favor?

9 (All present Commissioners respond in  
10 the affirmative.)

11 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed?

12 (No response.)

13 Review of Resolutions

14 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We will now review  
15 the resolutions to be voted on this evening.

16 CLERK POLLITT: You have Resolutions  
17 #136-25 through #173-25.

18 Commissioner Zur has indicated that she  
19 will abstain on Resolution #148-25.

20 Resolutions of Unanimous Consent

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Do I have a motion  
22 to accept the resolutions as a Consent Agenda with  
23 the noted abstention?

24 VICE CHAIRMAN TANELLI: So moved.

25 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Second?

1 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

2 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

3 Roll call.

4 (At this point in the proceeding roll  
5 call is taken and the Consent Agenda is passed by a  
6 vote of five in favor, with Commissioners Ortiz and  
7 Sullivan absent, and Commissioner Silna Zur  
8 abstaining on Resolution #148-25.)

9 CLERK POLLITT: With five yeases, the  
10 Consent Agenda is approved, with Commissioner Zur  
11 abstaining on #148-25.

12 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Are there any  
13 Resolutions of Nonconsent, tabled or pulled?

14 CLERK POLLITT: There are none.

15 Ordinances

16 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. We will now  
17 go on to our ordinance for First Reading and  
18 Introduction.

19 CLERK POLLITT: We have Ordinance  
20 25-03.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Will the Clerk  
22 read the ordinance by title only.

23 CLERK POLLITT: Ordinance 25-03 is a:

24 "GUARANTY ORDINANCE SECURING THE BERGEN  
25 COUNTY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY'S COUNTY GUARANTEED

1 REVENUE BONDS OR NOTES, SERIES 2025 (GREATER BERGEN  
2 COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC. PROJECT), IN AN  
3 AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED  
4 \$15,500,000."

5 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: May I have a  
6 motion to introduce Ordinance 25-03 as was read by  
7 the Clerk?

8 COMMISSIONER VOSS: So moved.

9 COMMISSIONER MARTE: Second.

10 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: All in favor?

11 (All present Commissioners respond in  
12 the affirmative.)

13 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Roll call, please.

14 (At this point in the proceeding roll  
15 call is taken and the Introduction and First Reading  
16 of Ordinance 25-03 is passed by a vote of five in  
17 favor, with Commissioners Ortiz and Sullivan absent.)

18 CLERK POLLITT: With five yeases,  
19 Ordinance 25-03 is introduced and passes First  
20 Reading.

21 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

22 Committee Reports from Commissioners

23 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We are now at the  
24 point of our committee reports and we ask that they  
25 be brief and responsive to committee business.

1 I'll start with Dr. Voss.

2 COMMISSIONER VOSS: Thank you, Madam  
3 Chairwoman.

4 This is a very busy, busy month. This  
5 was the Chinese New Year. And people don't realize  
6 it, but the Chinese New Year lasts for 15 days, so  
7 I've been to many, many, many events. This is the  
8 Year of the Snake. It's a very auspicious year. And  
9 I think tomorrow night, with the weather holding, we  
10 will have another final Chinese celebration.

11 This is the beginning of the Black  
12 History Month and so many events have been happening.  
13 Dr. Martin Luther King's Day was last month, and most  
14 of us went to Community Baptist Church to honor Dr.  
15 King, but also to make sure that nobody goes hungry.  
16 There were many, many, many people in attendance, and  
17 they packed lunches that children could take home who  
18 don't have sufficient food so that over the weekends  
19 they would have something that they could eat. We  
20 were shown how to package these things so that  
21 everybody had well rounded diets, which I thought was  
22 really very important.

23 Last Saturday, Lizette Parker's brunch  
24 or breakfast was held. Lizette Parker was one of the  
25 first Black women mayors, and unfortunately she

1 passed away when she was very, very young.  
2 Scholarships and people who do great things for the  
3 community are honored at this breakfast. And our own  
4 Commissioner, Tracy Zur, was honored for all of the  
5 things that she does, and so it was very, very good.

6 I'm an educator, so everything that I  
7 really, really love, including animals, has to do  
8 with education. We here in Bergen County, as I  
9 mentioned before, have some of the most wonderful,  
10 wonderful schools. I just wish that all the schools  
11 in the United States had the same quality education  
12 that our kids have here in Bergen County.

13 So on that note, thank you, Madam  
14 Chairwoman.

15 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER VOSS: My three B's, be  
17 brief, be sincere, and be seated.

18 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay.

19 Commissioner Zur.

20 COMMISSIONER SILNA ZUR: Thank you,  
21 Chairwoman.

22 First of all, thank you, Commissioner  
23 Voss, for mentioning the Lizette Parker award. It  
24 was something I was so touched that you all were  
25 there and really touched to receive the Dolores

1     Phillips Award. Dolores passed this past year, and  
2     to think we now need awards to remember these two  
3     icons in our county makes me tremendously sad but I  
4     also was very honored.

5                     Dr. Voss touched, January was jam  
6     packed between Martin Luther King Day events, Lunar  
7     New Year, Muslim Heritage Month, all celebrating our  
8     diversity, all making sure that every aspect of our  
9     community feels safe and feels valued and feels  
10    supported.

11                    I know that all of my colleagues on  
12    this Board not only were at these plethora of events  
13    throughout this month but really stand for that.

14                    Patrick, you touched on the craziness  
15    that we're seeing. Those are the values that we also  
16    need to double down on, making sure we're present and  
17    showing up to community and supporting each other  
18    through all of this, because ultimately there is so  
19    much more that binds us all together. I think that's  
20    what we all saw in the past month of these wonderful  
21    celebrations and memorials and remembrances is that  
22    the time is always right to do what is right, as Dr.  
23    King said, and that is definitely the time that we  
24    are standing in.

25                    I want to congratulate Courtney

1 Suffern, who was installed as the new president of  
2 the NAACP. She sure has her work cut out for her in  
3 this new environment.

4 I want to congratulate New Bridge  
5 Medical Center for their ribbon cutting on the new  
6 Thrive program, which continues to lead the way for  
7 our teenagers who are really struggling through this  
8 time too. When we have so many co-diagnoses of  
9 mental health and addiction issues and this is beyond  
10 an intensive outpatient, it is really going to be an  
11 amazing program that is going to be a vital research  
12 for our kids on their journeys to sobriety and  
13 meeting the needs of our community.

14 Finally, I want to take a moment to  
15 wish our County Executive a happy birthday, because  
16 it is in fact time his birthday today. As we all  
17 collaborate constantly to bring more efficiency to  
18 government, we are grateful to partner with him and  
19 wish him a happy birthday.

20 That is my report. Thank you,  
21 Chairwoman.

22 CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you,  
23 Commissioner.

24 Commissioner Rafael.

25 COMMISSIONER MARTE: Thank you, Madam

1 Chair.

2                   Yesterday, Congressman Gottheimer  
3 announced a game changing legislation called the  
4 "LITTLE Act" for Bergen County Families. This  
5 initiative provides a new \$10,000 refundable tax  
6 credit to cover the startup costs of child care  
7 centers. It more than doubled the child independent  
8 care credit to \$7,500 for one qualifying individual  
9 or \$15,000 for two or more, while indexing the credit  
10 for inflation.

11                   By making child care more accessible  
12 and affordable, this legislation supports working  
13 families, strengthens our local economy, and invests  
14 in our children's future.

15                   That's all I have, Madam Chair.

16                   CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Thank you so much.

17                   Commissioner Steven.

18                   VICE CHAIRMAN TANELLI: Thank you,  
19 Chairwoman.

20                   So I would just like to congratulate  
21 the newly promoted Lyndhurst Police Captains, Paul  
22 Haggerty and Vincent Auteri, both homegrown men that  
23 are protecting and serving the town where they grew  
24 up for years. I wish them both nothing but success  
25 as they take on this new leadership role.

1                   Also last night I was honored to attend  
2 the swearing-in of new Cliffside Park Chief Yakup  
3 Zoklu. Another dedicated public servant that through  
4 hard work and dedication will now shoulder the  
5 responsibility of keeping the community and the men  
6 and woman of the Cliffside Park Police Department  
7 safe.

8                   May God bless you and guide you.

9                   Thank you.

10                  CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Okay. Thank you.

11                  Last up here.

12                  As was said, we went to a lot of MLK  
13 Day events, and I was lucky enough to go to an NAACP  
14 panel discussion where young activists, organizers,  
15 and professionals shared their wisdom and experience.  
16 These were young people in their 20s, and they are  
17 the future of the movement. They are the ones. They  
18 are: Tia Welsh, Teji Vega, Alfred W. Lewis, Jr.,  
19 Shakee Merritt, and Kasai Sanchez. They just had  
20 such thoughtful and nuanced responses to all of these  
21 issues about continuing to seek equity, inclusion,  
22 and diversity, at a time especially when the federal  
23 administration would like to see the end of those  
24 things.

25                  We also attended, Tom Sullivan and I,

1 the council meeting in Ridgewood at which Mayor Paul  
2 Vagianos invited everybody who had helped to deal  
3 with the lighting on their Memorial Field. They  
4 completed the lighting, Ridgewood, which is a very  
5 important subject in every town. They had completed  
6 the lighting, but there was a piece of lighting that  
7 was missing over the girls softball field. So they  
8 went back and they ginned up more grant applications,  
9 and with our wonderful Open Space Trust Fund money,  
10 we were able to complete the circle of light over  
11 Veterans Field.

12 So we were happy to be there and to be  
13 thanked and to thank him for participating in our  
14 Open Space Trust Fund program.

15 I also went Tuesday to the Ramapough  
16 Lenape Center in Mahwah. These folks, who are the  
17 offspring of indigenous people who walked the  
18 mountains of Bergen County as long as 12,000 years  
19 ago, they are still trying to preserve their burial  
20 grounds, which are up in the mountains. They get  
21 trashed by people who come up and leave construction  
22 debris and other people who are riding ATV vehicles  
23 through their burial grounds.

24 So they have joined in a partnership  
25 with Montclair State University and they have

1     digitally mapped 180 graves up there. So we will  
2     continue to work to preserve and protect these sacred  
3     burial grounds. I'm happy to report that Montclair  
4     State University has a new minor called the "Native  
5     American and Indigenous Studies minor."

6                     So they will be working with the tribe,  
7     which is a wonderful thing.

8                     Finally, Black History Month, please  
9     follow the Bergen County African American Advisory  
10    Committee on Facebook to access our social media  
11    campaign, which this month is Black owned local  
12    business spotlights. We have our Black History event  
13    February 13th at Bergen Community College.

14                    So thank you.

15    Adjournment

16                    CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: So this concludes  
17    our meeting.

18                    There being nothing further to come  
19    before this meeting, I move to adjourn.

20                    COMMISSIONER VOSS: Second.

21                    CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: All in favor?

22                    (All present Commissioners respond in  
23    the affirmative.)

24                    CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: Opposed?

25                    (No response.)

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CHAIRWOMAN AMOROSO: We are adjourned  
at 7:49 p.m.  
Thank you all. Thanks for being here.  
(Whereupon, the Public Meeting is  
adjourned at 7:49 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, KIM O. FURBACHER, License No. XIO1042, a Certified Court Reporter, Registered Diplomate Reporter, Certified Realtime Court Reporter, and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, hereby certify that the foregoing is a verbatim record of the testimony provided under oath before any court, referee, board, commission or other body created by statute of the State of New Jersey.

I am not related to the parties involved in this action; I have no financial interest, nor am I related to an agent of or employed by anyone with a financial interest in the outcome of this action.

This transcript complies with Regulation 13:43-5.9 of the New Jersey Administrative Code.



KIM O. FURBACHER, CR, CCR, RDR  
License #XIO1042, and Notary Public  
of New Jersey

My Commission Expires:  
7/11/2029