

MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 7, 2026

The Meeting was called to order by Acting City Clerk, Katie Rose Walenty at 6:00 P.M. The Acting City Clerk read the Opening Prayer and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Acting City Clerk Walenty read the Notice of Publication Certification.

PRESENT: Councilman Conrad, Councilwoman Dato, Councilman Lenahan, Councilman Reilly and Councilman Gross

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Fred Henry, Acting City Clerk Katie Rose Walenty, Business Administrator David Kales, CFO Dan Balka, City Attorney Aaron Rainone, OEM Director Mark Herdman, Fire Chief Michael Kelly, Police Chief Patricia Kanecke, Kristal Manion, QPA, Acting Director of Public Works Kenneth Krass, Construction Official Gregory Czoch, Zoning Officer Jason Valeutto.

The City Clerk entertained a motion for temporary Council President. On motion by Mr. Gross nominated Mrs. Dato, seconded by Mr. Conrad, and with no further nominations and passed unanimously, Ms. Dato was appointed Temporary Council President.

Ms. Dato entertained a motion for Council President nominated Mr. Gross. On motion by Mrs. Dato, seconded by Mr. Conrad. Roll call vote: AYES: Mr. Conrad, Mrs. Dato, Mr. Lenahan, Mr. Gross. Nayes: Mr. Reilly. Mr. Gross was appointed Council President.

Council President Gross entertained a motion for Council Vice President, nominated Mrs. Dato. On motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Mr. Conrad and carried unanimously, Ms. Dato was appointed Vice President.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The following items are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be acted upon in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member so requests. In this event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in the normal sequence of the Agenda.

MOVED by: Mr. Dato of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution #26-001 through #26-046 are hereby approved retroactive to January 1, 2026. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Conrad **ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes: Conrad, Dato, Lenahan, Reilly, Gross All in favor.**

- Resolution 26-001 Resolution Authorizing Temporary Budget Appropriations for the 2026 Calendar Year
- Resolution 26-002 Resolution Adopting 2026 Cash Management Plan
- Resolution 26-003 Resolution establishing 2026 Meeting Dates
- Resolution 26-004 Resolution Adopting 2026 Holiday Schedule
- Resolution 26-005 Designating Official Newspapers
- Resolution 26-006 Designating Official Depositories
- Resolution 26-007 Resolution Filing Signature with Secretary of State
- Resolution 26-008 Appointment to Emergency Management Council
- Resolution 26-009 Appointment of Public Agency Compliance Officer
- Resolution 26-010 Appointment of Crossing Guards
- Resolution 26-011 Appointment Deputy Records Custodians

Resolution 26-012 Approval of Towing City Tow Service Operators
 Resolution 26-013 Change Fund – Tax Collector
 Resolution 26-014 Change Fund – City Clerk
 Resolution 26-015 Petty Cash Fund – Administration
 Resolution 26-016 Change Fund – Municipal Court Administrator
 Resolution 26-017 Approving municipal Public Defender
 Resolution 26-018 Establishing Interest Rate on Delinquent Taxes
 Resolution 26-019 Appointing JIF Commissioner and Alternate Commissioner
 Resolution 26-020 Establishing Interest Rate on Delinquent Sewer Use Fees
 Resolution 26-021 Authorizing Prepayment of Middlesex County Taxes
 Resolution 26-022 Appointing Planning Board members
 Resolution 26-023 Resolution Authorizing Tax Assessor to act as agent for the City of South Amboy for the purpose of filing and settling tax appeals on behalf of the taxing district for the tax year 2026

 Resolution 26-024 Approving Municipal Prosecutor
 Resolution 26-025 Authorizing Disbursement of Hospitalization and Health Benefits
 Resolution 26-026 Authorizing 2026 Pay Schedule and Pension Benefits
 Resolution 26-027 Authorizing the CFO to Wire Transfer Funds
 Resolution 26-028 Payroll Agreement with Sadie-Pope-Dowdell Library
 Resolution 26-029 Payroll Agreement with SARA
 Resolution 26-030 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Labor Counsel
 Resolution 26-031 Sustainable Green Team members Appointment
 Resolution 26-032 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for IT Services Ocean Computer Group

 Resolution 26-033 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Planning Board Planner/Engineer
 Resolution 26-034 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Consulting Engineer Services
 Resolution 26-035 Qualifying professional services for 2026
 Resolution 26-036 Authorizing the Award for Architectural Services
 Resolution 26-037 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Special Tax Counsel
 Resolution 26-038 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Planning Board Attorney
 Resolution 26-039 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Risk Management Consultant/Liability Insurance Broker of Record

 Resolution 26-040 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Auditor
 Resolution 26-041 Authorizing the Award of a Contract for Bond Counsel
 Resolution 26-042 Authorizing the Award of Contract for General Counsel
 Resolution 26-043 Authorizing the Award of Contract for Grant Writer/Administrator
 Resolution 26-044 Authorizing Award of Contract for Environmental Engineer
 Resolution 26-045 Citizen Advisory Committee Appointments
 Resolution 26-046 Appointing a Municipal Court Judge

BEGIN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NO. 26-047

APPROVAL AND RELEASE OF MINUTES

BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of South Amboy does hereby approve and release the Council Minutes of the December 17, 2025 Council Meeting.

MOVED by: Mr. Conrad of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 26-047 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by:** Mr. Lenahan **ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes: Conrad, Lenahan, Reilly, Gross Abstain: Dato**

RESOLUTION NO. 26-048

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST

BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of South Amboy does hereby receive and approve the payment of the bill list dated December 30, 2025, as presented by the Chief Financial Officer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the bill list be appended to the official minutes.

MOVED by: Mr. Conrad of the Council of the City of South Amboy, that Resolution No. 26-048 is hereby approved. **SECONDED by: Ms. Dato . ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes: Conrad, Dato Lenahan, Reilly, Gross**

Mr. Reilly commented that he is happy to see the Fire Department getting a grant for safety gear and working on a grant to help with recruitment for more volunteers.

COMMENTS

Mr. Reilly:

- Happy New Year.
- Thanked the first responders and food pantry volunteers.
- 30,000lbs donated by Food Pantry in 2025. Would like to honor those that work there.
- Government Week is scheduled for April 15th. There will be a mock council meeting, high school essay contest, open house at OEM, Fire, First Aid.

Mr. Lenahan

- Thanked the first responders and volunteers.
- Update on the Fourth street and Feltus Street – utility poles will be getting removed shortly.

Mr. Conrad:

- Congratulated Mr. Gross on Council President.
- Mr. Conrad asked Business Administrator David Kales to give an update on the no water/low water pressure event at took place earlier in the morning. All has been restored.
- Happy New Year.
- Thanked the fire department, first aid squad and volunteers for their service
- Welcomed new Fire Chief Kelly, 1st assistant Charles Honimar, and 2nd assistant Kenneth Kokoskza.
- Congratulated former Fire Chief Rafael Albarran.
- Thank you to the department heads for their service.

Ms. Dato:

- Wished everyone a Happy New Year
- Grateful for being appointed Vice Council President again. I look forward to another year of service.
- Cannot guarantee a result but will do her best.
- Thank you to all the volunteers.
- Thank you to all departments and staff.

Mr. Gross

- Will do the best he can.
- Thank you to the department heads.
- Thank you to the volunteers.
- Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor Henry:

- Congratulated Fire Chiefs, Kelly, Honimar, Kokoskza
- Thank you to all the volunteers.
- Welcome new attorney, Aaron Rainone.
- Acknowledged some items of the past year in 2025:
 - Adopting a budget which resulted in a reduction in taxes
 - Appointed first female Chief of Police in South Amboy and Middlesex County history.
 - Hired 3 new police officers.
 - Purchased 3 motorcycles for the Police Department and received a hummer for the DARE program.
 - New senior transportation bus has arrived
 - First Aid Squad had a rise in volunteers and received a new ambulance with automatic stretcher.
 - Acquisition of a drone to help the emergency departments.
 - Public Works Department received a front-end loader to aid in salting, beach cleanup and more.
 - To assist the business, we have obtained property on lower Broadway and will have an additional 80 parking spots.
 - Seniors and Recreation initiated a dedicated bench program at the waterfront walkway.
 - Congratulated Mickey Gross as Council President and Zusette Dato on Vice Council President.
 - 250th anniversary of the adoption of the declaration of independence and will be working on a celebration.
 - Look forward to another successful year.
 - David Kales, instrumental in getting things done like the Ferry, parking lot. I trust him completely to get answers and things done. Thank you for all the work of the past 3 years.

Mr. Kales:

- Thank you to my department's heads in 2025 for all we accomplished
- Wished the new Fire Chief's good luck.
- The response from our departments regarding the water emergency with Middlesex County was amazing. Thank you to all my departments.
- December, we had a lot of snow and salting events and thank you to our DPW.

Mr. Aaron Rainone

- Thank you, Mayor, Council and Administration, for this opportunity.
- Looking forward to working with everyone.

Mark Rasimowicz

- Thank Mayor and Council for the continued support and looking forward to 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brandon Russell, South Amboy NJ

- Looking for an update on SARA and YMCA with not renewing the lease and if there is a plan on the building.
- AV upgrades that have been discussed multiple times through 2025 and asked if the Council is interested in AV upgrades for the Council Chambers.
- Asked about the Venetian settlement.
- Renegotiated March Development Pilot – update on when it will be presented.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Mrs. Dato and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 6:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Rose Walenty
Acting Municipal Clerk
Approved 1-21-2026