

Municipality of Princeton, NJ

*400 Witherspoon St
Princeton, NJ 08540*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, June 23, 2025

7:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88517888100>

Webinar ID: 885 1788 8100

Main Council Chambers

Mayor and Council of Princeton

I. JOIN MEETING - PLEASE CLICK LINK BELOW:

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II. STATEMENT CONCERNING NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and State regulations governing public meetings, including the time, date and location of the meeting and clear and concise instructions to the public for accessing the meeting and making comments. In addition, the agenda and all related materials were posted electronically and made available to the public on Princeton's meeting portal in advance of the meeting.

III. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"We gather today on the land of the Leni Lenape. As members of the Princeton community, we aspire to show appreciation, respect, and concern for all peoples and our environment. We honor the Lenape and other Indigenous caretakers of these lands and waters, the elders who lived here before, the Indigenous today, and the generations to come"

Councilwoman Michelle Pirone Lambros read the Land Acknowledgement.

IV. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Brian McDonald, Council Member Michelle Pirone Lambros, Council Member David Cohen, Council Member Mia Sacks, Council Member Leticia Fraga, Council Member Leighton Newlin, and Mayor Mark Freda

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**1. Mayor and Council of Princeton- Regular Meeting- March 24, 2025**

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Leticia Fraga

SECONDER: Leighton Newlin

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

Absent: Council Member Sacks

2. Mayor and Council of Princeton- Closed Session- March 26, 2025

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Leticia Fraga

SECONDER: Leighton Newlin

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

Absent: Council Member Sacks

3. Mayor and Council of Princeton- Closed Session- April 8, 2025

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Leticia Fraga

SECONDER: Leighton Newlin

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

Absent: Council Member Sacks

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

Councilman Brian McDonald spoke in honor and remembrance of former Princeton Township Committeeman and Mayor Jack Wallace.

Councilwoman Michelle Pirone Lambros thanked everyone involved with making Cyclovia happen. Even though the weather did not cooperate, it was a great first cooperative effort.

Councilman David Cohen had no reports or announcements.

Council President Mia Sacks had no reports or announcements.

Councilwoman Leticia Fraga had no reports or announcements.

Councilman Leighton Newlin announced on Saturday, June 28th between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m., at the Arts Council of Princeton, the Witherspoon-Jackson Neighborhood Association will hold a meeting to cover the following items: presentation by Jim Purcell on neighborhood trails and tree canopies, presentation by Josh Zinder and his team on the revisioning of 254 Witherspoon Street that will include a laundromat, updates from the Witherspoon-Jackson Development Corporation, Paul Robeson House, the Witherspoon-Jackson Historical and Cultural Society, and a review of the joint efforts agenda for August of this year.

Mayor Mark Freda announced Resolutions #25-222 and #25-227 will be pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Staff Reports:

There were no staff reports or announcements.

1. Police Chief's Report- April 2025

Capt. Matthew Solovay presented the Chief's Report for the month of April 2025. He noted the report was highlighted by several community policing interactions. Capt. Solovay focused on the Wheels Rodeo event which promotes bicycle safety and reinforcing roadway safety for younger riders and a traffic safety campaign they launched in June. The new campaign is focused on eliminating bicycle riding on sidewalks and the prohibited areas around town in the Central Business District. Officers have been daily assigned to conduct education and enforcement in those areas. Efforts have also been made to include educational messages on their social media platforms and by placement of electronic variable message boards strategically placed throughout the CBD. Also, in the interest of traffic safety, the Traffic Safety Bureau is coordinating with the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey to put together a community training and educational seminar in mid-August.

2. 2024 Audit Report Presentation by David Gannon, PKF O'Connor Davies

Sandra Webb, CFO and David Gannon, Municipal Auditor, presented the audit report via "Zoom". Mr. Gannon began by noting it was another successful year of finances for the municipality and they issued a unmodified audit opinion. An unmodified audit opinion means they take no exceptions to any of the accounting practices that Princeton is following and that Princeton complies with the reporting requirements as promagated by the Division of Local Government Services. Also, the overall financial records of the municipality are in excellent condition. The municipality is in excellent financial position and the Current Fund balance at the end of 2024 was \$25.2 million, which was an increase of \$3.3 million from the prior year. In the 2024 budget, the municipality used almost \$11 million to balance its budget. However, there were several revenues that allowed the municipality to build back the that surplus amount; \$5.8 million from appropriation reserves from the prior year lapsing, \$2.7 million of tax revenues that exceeded the anticipated budget, as well as several other miscellaneous revenues that exceed the budget (most notably sewer rents) exceeded \$1.6 to \$8.1 million and interest on investments also exceeded its budget by \$1.6 million at \$2.2 million. The Affordable Housing Utility end of the year fund balance was \$256,000 but it also had \$2.4 million in program reserves and the Parking Utility Fund had \$3.6 million of fund balance, which was unchanged from the prior year. It is important to note that the Parking Utility Fund continued to contribute \$1.8 million to the Current Fund operations. The 2024 tax collection rate was 99%, the net debt at the end of 2024 was \$25 million, there were several capital projects that were authorized totaling \$89 million, and the municipality's remaining borrowing power is \$147 million.

In addition to the financial statement audit, they were also required to perform a state single audit over the green and trust loans, as well as, the I-Bank funds. It is a separate audit that looks at compliance with grant regulations and they have issued a modified opinion on compliance. Over the course of the audit, tests are performed of various internal controls and compliance and they did not find any exceptions or violations of statute that would require corrective action.

3. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Accepting the 2024 Audit and Group Affidavit

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: David Cohen

SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

VIII. PRESENTATION

1. Presentation of the Community Park South Concept Plan Prepared by Bowman / Mahan Rykiel Associates, Inc.

Councilwoman Michelle Pirone Lambros noted before the presentation that they were insistent about not putting anything in the plan that would preclude having to take down trees and that the previous concept plan would have taken down trees. That condition created a shift in the various amenities presented in the revised plan. She also mentioned they are working really hard at finding ways to raise money. It is a \$25 million dollar project and it has been requested that the project be done in three phases over time. Potential funding sources include state funding, county funding, and grant opportunities. They are also looking into setting up a 501c3.

Evan Moorhead, Recreation Director, explained there were some minor adjustments to the concept plan but they are still at the 30,000 foot view. The proposal being presented was shared with the project steering committee, which consists of members of municipal staff, council members, the Princeton Public Schools, and the Environmental Commission, several weeks ago and was received favorably. Mr. Moorhead then introduced Jared Moran, Project Manager, of Bowman Consultants.

Jared Moran and Mick Humes, Lead Landscape Designer, at Mahan Rykiel Associates, shared a PowerPoint presentation on the Master Plan updates. Slides reviewed the structure of the project team, project timeline, the current Master Plan, and the proposed concept plan. Mr. Humes noted one of the key things they were tasked with was to take a look at the master plan and understand what the impacts were of the existing site features and to optimize those opportunities within the overall project. One of the big things was to look at the existing tree infrastructure on the project and finding ways to creatively keep all of the programs that is packed into the park while trying to maintain as much of the existing canopy coverage as possible. He then reviewed the proposed concept plan in detail.

Councilman David Cohen stated the plan is much improved and they did a great job of fitting in everything that needs to be fit in while preserving the trees.

Councilwoman Leticia Fraga liked everything that was presented but inquired about where families will be able to gather.

Council President Mia Sacks commented the proposed concept is an improvement over what was already a good plan and inquired about the infrastructure underneath (the pipes) and the

green infrastructure; what is the time frame and how long will it take to integrate them into the rest of the plan. Council President Sacks also inquired about the size of the dog parks.

Mayor Mark Freda inquired about field lighting.

Councilwoman Michelle Pirone Lambros noted they have asked for everything to be wired underground, so that when the work is ready to be done, the infrastructure will already be there to add plumbing, water, and electric without having to rip up the fields.

Councilman Leighton Newlin stated he thinks the proposed plan satisfies the interests of all people who want to go to the park and it does a really good job of building community.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The Mayor and Council will take comments first from members of the public attending the meeting in person, then from members of the public attending the meeting via Zoom. Speakers will be limited to 3 minutes. No immediate action will be taken on any public comment issue.

IN-PERSON:

Please use the sign-up sheet on the podium. After everyone who signed up has had the opportunity to speak, the Mayor will invite any additional comments from members of the public. Please line up at the podium if you plan to speak.

ZOOM:

To make a comment or ask a question during the meeting via zoom, raise your hand using one of the following alternatives:

1. Windows or Mac platform: Click on "Participants" at the bottom of the screen, then click on "raise hand" (Windows shortcut: Alt+Y; Mac shortcut: Option+Y).
2. Android or iOS device: Click on "raise hand" in the bottom left corner of your screen.
3. Telephone: Press #9

Mayor Mark Freda opened public comment for items not on the agenda first to those attending the meeting in person, then to those via "Zoom".

In Person:

Sam Bunting, 99 Dempsey Avenue, commented on the orange "Defend Historic Princeton" signs around town. When he saw them he was not very happy and it made him wonder what historic Princeton is being defended. There is some really good history but there is also a history of exclusion. He thinks the signs are ignominious and should be removed. Mr. Bunting also inquired why the signs have not been removed yet, as they have been placed in the public right-of-way.

Via "Zoom":

Members of Resistencia en Accion NJ, Princeton University students, residents, and members of neighboring communities urged Council to pass a local resolution in support of the Immigration Trust Act.

Seeing no one further in person or via "Zoom", Mayor Mark Freda closed public comment for items not on the agenda.

X. ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

1. An Ordinance by the Municipality of Princeton Increasing Princeton's Sewer Service Charges and Amending the "Code of the Borough of Princeton, New Jersey, 1974"- Roll Call

RESULT: INTRODUCED ON FIRST READING

MOVER: Michelle Pirone Lambros

SECONDER: David Cohen

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

XI. RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing the Purchase of Three (3) 2025 Ford F-250 Pickup Trucks for the Department of Public Works from Winner Ford for \$202,193.00 utilizing New Jersey State Contract 24-FLEET-103120

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Brian McDonald

SECONDER: David Cohen

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

2. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing the Purchase of a 2025 Ford F-250 Pickup Truck for the Recreation Department from Winner Ford for \$66,097.00 utilizing New Jersey State Contract 24-FLEET-103120

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Leighton Newlin

SECONDER: David Cohen

- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
3. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing the Submittal of a Fiscal Year 2026 New Jersey Department of Transportation Municipal Aid Grant Application (MA-2026-North Harrison Street Traffic Calmin-00421) and Execution of a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: David Cohen
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
4. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing the Submittal of a Fiscal Year 2026 New Jersey Department of Transportation Bikeways Grant Application (BIKE-2026-Hamilton Avenue - Moore St-00028) and Execution of a Grant Contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
SECONDER: Leighton Newlin
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
5. Resolution of the Mayor and Council Of Princeton Authorizing the Award of a Master Performance Agreement in Accordance with the Recommendation Set Forth in the Evaluation Report Dated June 19, 2025, in Connection With Princeton's Community Solar Renewable Energy Program

Christine Symington, Executive Director of Sustainable Princeton, and Belle Gabel of Gabel Associates, presented a brief PowerPoint presentation on developing a community solar program that would serve low to moderate income households in Princeton. The slides reviewed what is community solar, the benefits, how community solar works, sample consolidated billing, the municipal sponsored approach, the bid, evaluation criteria in the RFP by which the respondents would be evaluated, and how the outreach will be rolled out.

RESULT: ADOPTED
MOVER: Brian McDonald
SECONDER: Mia Sacks

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

XII. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Mark Freda inquired if any items need to be removed from the Consent Agenda. Councilwoman Michelle Pirone Lambros requested the removal of Resolution #25-222, "Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton to Cease and Desist Alcoholic Beverage License 1114-31-032-002 as of June 30, 2025", so she can abstain from the vote. A motion was made to remove the resolution by Councilwoman Leticia Fraga, seconded by Councilman Brian McDonald, and carried unanimously by all members present.

Resolution #25-227, "Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing an Amended License Agreement with Rider University" was also removed from the Consent Agenda to permit an explanation of the agreement. A motion was made by Councilman David Cohen, seconded by Councilman Leighton Newlin, and carried unanimously by all members present.

1. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing the Payment of Bills and Claims

RESULT: ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

2. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing Alcoholic Beverage License for the Licensing Period July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

RESULT: ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros

Aye: Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

3. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton to Cease and Desist Alcoholic Beverage License 1114-31-032-002 as of June 30, 2025

RESULT: ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Brian McDonald

- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
- Abstain:** Council Member Pirone Lambros
4. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing the Appointments to Boards, Commissions, and Committees
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
5. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Approving a Chapter 159-Special Budget Item for New Jersey Association of County & City Health Officials \$193,000.00
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
6. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing Special Event for the Husayn Center for Social Justice to hold a Silent March for Justice on Sunday, August 31, 2025
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
7. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Approving the Princeton Community Democratic Organization, Annual Summer Picnic, Grover Park, July 13, 2025, 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros

- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
8. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing an Amended License Agreement with Rider University
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leighton Newlin
SECONDER: David Cohen
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
9. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing an Amended License Agreement with Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin
10. Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Princeton Authorizing an Amended License Agreement with the Princeton Ballet Society
- RESULT:** ADOPTED
MOVER: Leticia Fraga
SECONDER: Michelle Pirone Lambros
- Aye:** Council Member McDonald, Council Member Pirone Lambros, Council Member Cohen, Council Member Sacks, Council Member Fraga, and Council Member Newlin

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn 9:13 p.m. was made by Councilman David Cohen, seconded by Councilman Brian McDonald, and carried unanimously by all members present.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Mount
Municipal Clerk