The Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hackensack was held at City Hall, 65 Central Avenue, Hackensack, New Jersey, on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 5:30 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Mayor Gaines called the meeting to order and the Acting City Clerk Timothy Hoffman announced, "This meeting is being held in accordance with the "Open Public Meeting Act," N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice having been published according to law, with a copy on file in the City Clerk's Office, and a copy posted on the Bulletin Board in City Hall."

Mr. Hoffman called the roll: Mayor Gaines, Deputy Mayor Toomey, Councilman Carroll, Councilwoman Clark-Collins, and Councilman Diaz were present. City Manager Thomas Freeman was present. City Attorney Richard Malagiere was present. Acting Clerk Timothy Hoffman was present. Deputy City Clerk Allison Saabye was present.

FLAG SALUTE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from March 24, 2026 Regular Meeting and April 6, 2026 Special Meeting was offered by Councilwoman Clark Collins, seconded by Deputy Mayor Toomey and approved by Mayor Gaines, Deputy Mayor Toomey, Councilman Carroll, Councilman Diaz and Councilwoman Clark-Collins.

II. RESOLUTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey			X				
Clark-Collins		X	X				
Carroll	X		X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN EXECUTIVE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack deem it necessary to discuss certain actions under Section 7b7 & 7b8 of the Open Public Meetings Act which pertains to matters falling within attorney-client privilege, on-going litigation and personnel matters concerning the employment of a current or prospective public employee(s).

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack is of the opinion that such circumstances may presently exist; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to discuss the following issues:

1. On-going Litigation **:** *Peter Greco, et al. v. City of Hackensack*
2. Matters involving attorney/client privilege: *Tax Appeals*
3. Matters involving the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property
4. Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiations

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack deem it necessary to exclude the public from this discussion. The outcome of the discussion will be disclosed within 90 days or at such time as the interests of the City do not require confidentiality.

III. PROCLAMATIONS & PRESENTATION:

a. Proclamations
   i. Dorothy Bullock Schroth 100th Birthday
   ii. Autism Acceptance Month

Main Street Business Alliance 2026 Budget Presentation: John Peters, Main Executive Director of the Main Street Business Alliance – The Alliance is the managing entity for the City of Hackensack's special improvement district, a public private partnership that has been in place for nearly two decades. The district encompasses Main Street generally from courthouse green up north through the 7-11 and some side streets downtown. From its inception, the Alliance's mission has been to promote the revitalization of the special improvement district. This mission clearly aligns with that of the City to serve as a catalyst for positive change and to ensure that the Main Street is an attractive, active, and economically viable place to visit, work and conduct business. I am here to present the proposed 2026 budget for the special improvement district but before I do that it is important to clarify that this is not funded through the City's general tax levy. Rather, our operations are funded entirely through the special assessments paid by property owners within the district. Accordingly, the City general taxpayers do not bear the cost of the district's operation, instead the budget is supported by those property owners who directly benefit from the services provided. The proposed budget supports a comprehensive range of supplemental services including sanitation, landscaping, business retention and support, public relations, marketing, creative placemaking like the new XO sculpture in Atlantic Street Park, and the coordination of large public events and small. These events are intended to enhance the overall appearance and vitality of the district, strengthening local businesses and encourage increased pedestrian activity throughout the downtown. For example, Hackensacktoberfest last year had over 4,000 attendees, many of you were able to come and I thank you. Or inaugural salsa social was an event where we had no idea how many people would show up and we had 500 participants. These family-friendly events continue to contribute to a vibrant downtown atmosphere, increase foot traffic along Main Street and provide tangible economic benefits to the businesses within the district. I am happy to go through the budget, but I am not going to go line by line. You will see the 2025 budget was $708,021. We tried to keep it simple, and we kept the amount the same for this year with a modest 2.9% increase to $728,521 because of increases in prices. The administration and systems at $267,000. The clean and green imitative which is anything from cleaning the garbage, graffiti, watering, we were able to get a new deal this year and switched over to one vendor and we saved a significant amount of money which is helping us increase a couple of events. The visual improvement includes things like business recruitment and retention but also the storefront improvement grant program which allows us to go through the downtown and see some of the signs that really need love and attention and need to be replaced and give a financial incentive to those storeowners to help do that. Plus, we give some modest sign grants to some new businesses coming on to Main Street. Where we spend most of our time and effort is in our signature events and marketing and promotion of those events which include everything from Hackensacktoberfest and a Main Street music festival and parade to the business expo on May 14th at the HACPAC, the Banta Place salsa socials. We tested one last year, we hope to have four this year and that allows us to address part of the community that has been neglected for some time. Event programming and marketing, social, all the PR that goes along with it is a significant amount of work. That is the final portion for $240,000. I am happy to answer any questions that anyone may have.

IV. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS FROM PROFESSIONALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Public Hearing 2026 Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Application – Baldwin Park Splash Pad:

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At this time, we will open the public hearing concerning the City of Hackensack's proposed submission of an application to the 2026 Bergen County Open Space, Recreation, Floodplain Protection, Farmland & Historic Preservation Trust Fund for improvements at Baldwin Park. The project under consideration is the construction of a new splash pad at Baldwin Park. The proposed splash pad would be located in the area of the park where the old basketball courts are currently situated. This portion of the park is presently an underutilized paved area, and the City is seeking to repurpose it into a more active and family-oriented recreational amenity. The proposed project is intended to expand outdoor recreational opportunities for Hackensack residents, particularly children and families, by creating a safe, accessible, and engaging water play feature within Baldwin Park. The project is also intended to complement the park's existing amenities, including the nearby playground, and improve the overall functionality and attractiveness of the park. As currently envisioned, the project may include demolition and removal of the existing paved court surface, site preparation, installation of the splash pad and spray features, a recirculating water system, drainage and utility improvements, ADA-accessible surfacing and access improvements, walkways, seating, and related site restoration work. This hearing is being held as part of the County's application requirements and is intended to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the proposed park improvements before the Mayor and Council consider a resolution authorizing submission of the grant application. For the benefit of the public, I will briefly note that this is a matching grant program. The City is seeking Bergen County Open Space funding for the project, and the City would be responsible for providing the required local matching share. The final grant request amount is based on the engineer's estimate prepared for the project. At this stage, tonight's hearing is for public input on the proposed improvement and the City's submission of the application. It is also important to note that this hearing and the associated resolution authorize submission of the application only. Final project implementation remains subject to County review, possible award, final scope confirmation, and all applicable design, permitting, and procurement requirements. Residents may also wish to know whether the project will be accessible. The City's intent is that the project be designed and constructed in compliance with applicable ADA and accessibility requirements so that the splash pad can be safely used by as many residents as possible. Residents may further wish to know why this project is being proposed at Baldwin Park. The City believes this project is an appropriate improvement because it would convert an older paved area associated with the former basketball courts into a modern recreational amenity in a neighborhood park setting, near existing family-oriented park features and in proximity to Fairmount Elementary School. At this time, we will be asking to open the floor for public comment. If anyone wishes to be heard on the proposed Baldwin Park splash pad project or the City's submission of the Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund application, please come forward and state your name and address for the record.

A motion to open the meeting to the public was offered by Councilman Carroll seconded by Deputy Mayor Toomey.

Erin Meccia – I attended the Rec Board meeting before baseball and softball opened up. Ms. Clark Collins commented that the splash pad was a "no can do" so I was wondering if anything changed or what happened? I speak for at least three neighbors on Ross Avenue who have children who don't feel like a splash pad would enrich their direct community, their neighborhood. I am not so sure that a splash pad belongs in that residential neighborhood right next to a school. I think it can complicate things after school. If we are looking at revamping the park, I think there are a lot of great things that can be done including the baseball field, repurposing that court into a turf court or making some open play structures. I guess that's it. I wanted to make those comments because I wanted to make sure the splash pad is still on the table because I heard it was off the table at that meeting. Thank you.

Fred Miller – I live on Cedar Avenue with parents who live on Ross Avenue where I walk my kid to Baldwin. I was there yesterday and when I read about the splash pad I was a little disappointed. It brings a lot of liability with things that can happen to kids when I think that money and attention would be better spent on the actual play structures, the stuff around the play structures allowing all the mud and wood clips to flow out. If you look at the structure down at Nellie K. Parker and all the grippy stuff coming off of it, it is very bouncy and the metal. I think we have parks in disrepair and before we invest in splash pads, we should invest in keeping up with what we have. That is my thoughts.

(via email) Angela Zhinin - I live at 222 Ross Ave, just down the block from Baldwin Park. I'm sorry I can't attend the meeting, but I wanted to share my thoughts. I have three young children (ages 8, 5 and 16 months), and Baldwin Park has been an important part of our routine. Last year especially, we walked through the park almost every day after school. My son would join pickup soccer games with friends, while my daughter wandered collecting spiky seed balls and my youngest napped in her stroller. Sometimes we stayed for only ten minutes, but often times for over an hour. It was simple, unstructured, and worked really well for our family. That's why I support improving the park. I would love to see a better playground, swings for younger kids, and preserved open space. These things can be used every day, year-round. I do have concerns about adding a splash pad at this location. For much of the year it wouldn't be usable, and during the times it is running, it would actually make everyday visits harder. Walking home from school, younger children will naturally want to run into the water even when they aren't prepared, which would likely lead families like mine to avoid the park during those times. There are also practical concerns. Our street already has issues with speeding, and a destination feature like a splash pad could increase traffic. Parking is limited and already impacted by the nearby school and apartments. The park also lacks bathroom facilities, which are essential for a feature designed for longer visits. I'm also concerned about preserving the existing trees and shade, which are a valuable part of the park. Since Baldwin Park is small, it works best as a neighborhood park that supports everyday use, especially for families walking home from school. I hope any improvements build on that and focus on features that can be enjoyed consistently throughout the year. Thank you for your time and consideration.

No one else wished to speak.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was offered by Councilman Diaz and seconded by Councilwoman Clark Collins.

2026 Budget Presentation: CFO Jim Mangin – Good evening. We are here to talk about the 2026 budget. The budget was introduced at the April 6th Council meeting and public hearing will be at the next Council meeting on May 5th. It is scheduled for adoption assuming we get state approval by then. Tonight we will talk about the budget itself and since this is first budget we are doing together, before we get into the budget, I wanted to spend time talking about the financial condition of Hackensack today or the state of economy here in Hackensack and in particular where we are in the economy and how we got here and most importantly, what we need to do to improve. To do that, I have this graph, this is Hackensack's net valuations. Net valuations are the value of all property in the City. When people talk about taxes they are usually referring to the tax levy which is that portion of the budget paid for by taxes. The other part is valuations, the value of all the property in the city. This chart starts in 2007 all the way to 2026, where we are today. You will see a large slope down followed by up and today a short slope downward. Currently in this period of economic decline which needs to be reversed and I will explain how we got here because that is important for taxes. The first slope down was the period of recession in 2007 to 2015. The recession effected everyone nationwide, everyone's property values dropped throughout the country but it was a recession which are short. Depressions are long. Recessions are short. The recession was over by 2010 and that is when recovery began. In the area around Hackensack all the communities bordering us all started to recover at end of 2009 start of 2010, not Hackensack. Hackensack continued to drop in valuations. By 2011 all the other municipalities had recovered and we kept dropping. When valuations

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drop, the tax rate rises. When the tax rate rises, businesses tend to close, flee or knock their building down so they don't have to pay taxes which causes valuations to drop even more. They drop even more and the tax rate rises even more. That brings us to 2015 to 2021 which was a period of recovery. This is what you can call the era of redevelopment and the PILOTs were going to be the main tool to try and attract development and grow the valuations by bringing in new properties. The theory being you give a tax break to the property in hopes it will attract 20 new properties. With 20 new properties, it will generate tax revenue to make up for the tax break for the PILOTed property. During this period from 2015 to 2021, it worked. Valuations grew and increased by 1.9 billion during this period so we fully recovered what it had lost and then some. As valuations increased, the tax rate fell every year from 2015 to 2021 and during this period 18 PILOTs were granted. That gets us to 2021. In 2022, valuations dropped. It was nothing to be concerned about until 2023 when they dropped again. That is a concern, two years in a row is a problem. When they dropped three years in a row in 2024, that's an area for alarm. That is a cause for me to figure out what is happening here. In finance when something is wrong, you have to look at it and find out where the problem is and figure out what needs to happen to fix it. When I studied the three years of drops, I found that the drop is occurring in the commercial sector. Commercial valuations were dropping. Why? The big reason was because of tax appeals. A business owner appeals his taxes and wins and then the assessment is lowered which brings valuations down. That was a big part of the problem but not the only part. The other part is when we award a PILOT, that commercial property comes off the tax rolls completely. Commercial valuations were dropping which was tax appeals but at the same time tax exempt properties rose. That's PILOTs. That is properties coming off the rolls, and our valuations are dropping. During this period, 2021 – 2026, 10 more PILOTs were awarded and then three were rescinded at the first meeting of your administration but during this period we are not seeing any growth. We aren't seeing any new ratables coming in but there were 7 PILOTs awarded. At this point in time we are in a period of economic decline and it is obvious that PILOTs as a fiscal policy are not working, not attracting growth. We haven't had growth since 2021 so what is needed now is not just a new policy but an entirely new financial vision for the city, something that looks at the entirety of Hackensack's economy. PILOTs tend to laser in on municipal revenue. When you look at the whole thing, they are coming off the tax rolls. If they are bringing in other ratables that is great but if they are not bringing in other ratables then they are hurting. It kind of reminds me of when my kid was young and got the flu, I took him to the doctor and doctor wrote a script for antibiotics and there were no refills so I tried to refill it and I called the doctor and he said you don't refill antibiotics. Once he is cured, he's cured. You keep giving him more antibiotics, you will do more harm than good. Kind of the same analogy, more harm than good. We need a financial vision that looks at entirety of the Hackensack economy. Your administration looking at a whole, not just pieces, has been a vision of your administration since you took office. You have been saying it every council meeting one way or another that we are one city, one community, one set of problems. You've said it but I like the phrase that Hackensack is more than just one street. I really do like that term. You need to apply that same vision to the financial policy that you set. The budget is the financial plan for the governing body to achieve their vision for the city. The 2026 budget seeks to put all the city's resources to work, all the time, and for the benefit for all the residents. The 2026 budget needs to be consistent with the vision that the Mayor and Council have. It must include funding for the priorities that the Mayor and Council identified and at the same time has to address budget issues that affect the future financial health of the City. It is vital that the budget looks to the future, it can't be considered as a one year event. When that happens, it causes trouble and part of the problem that we are trying to rectify today was caused by last year's budget not doing that. It is important to remember the budget has to look to the future. Finally, it has to keep the tax increase as low as possible without losing sight of the first two points. The 2026 budget does hit all three points. The increase to levy is 10.25 percent. There are a number of reasons for that which I will get into. The average home is $46.48 per month. You as governing body have every right to demand to know why is the increase that high, has the administration done everything to keep it low, and what have we done to make sure in the future we won't see a high increase like that.

In the budget, we are looking at a spending increase of 7.1 million over the last year Health benefits are up 6.3 million. The bill from the Bergen County Utilities Authority is up $900,000. We haven't seen any increase in non-tax revenue from last year. That is not helping. From last year there is a drop of 1.6 million in local revenue which needs to be made up by taxes from poor budget projection last year. The 2025 budget didn't look to the future. Poor budget decisions regarding local revenue in the 2025 budget what that did is postponed what should have been a 2025 tax increase and pushed it into a 2026 tax increase. In short, what should have happened is it should have been a tax increase in 2025, should have been a larger tax increase in 2025 which would have translated to a smaller tax increase in 2026. The 2025 budget didn't look to the future. We are rectifying that in 2026. I will speak more about that later. The spending increase is the main driver in this budget. The health benefits are up 6.3 million. Health benefits have been an issue state wide for 4 years now. There has been a lot of talk about health care costs. I am sure that across the state there are CFOs telling their governing body health benefits are up, there is nothing you can do, it is out of our control and that may be true for them but that is not true in Hackensack. Other municipalities may belong to a state health benefits plan where they pay premiums and they are told what the premiums are and they have to pay them, they have no choice. In Hackensack, we are self-insured, we pay claims instead or premiums and because of that, we do have the ability to look at our own claim data and see where the problem is to see what we can do and take steps to fix it. I have been looking at claim data since 2023 and we have been trying different things to try to fix this problem but last year, from 2025 to now, our medical and Rx claims up 3.7 million dollars which is a 13 percent increase. The state health benefits plan the premiums which is the comparison are up 36 percent, so we are in better shape than the state health benefits plan. Our problem is we have excess loss insurance. We pay claims but we can only pay so much, if there is a claim for something extremely costly like an organ transplant which is needed, we wouldn't have the money for that so we have insurance for that. Once a claim goes over a certain amount, our insurance kicks in. In 2025, the claims were so high that we had a lot of these high claims that went against our insurance so much so that it drove our premium up 2.6 million dollars which was a 48 percent increase on that policy. Our policy has a clause saying you can't raise it more than 50 percent so they raised it 48 percent. It was these runaway medical claims in 2025 that formed the basis for the medical budget in 2026 and those same claims in 2025 that set the premium for the excess loss insurance which is up 48 percent from last year so, we have to look at those runaway claims and find out what the problem is and take care of it. That is the job. 6.3 million and we need to know what are we doing about this? That is driving the increase and that can't stand. 2025 monthly medical claims were through the roof, higher than I have ever seen. This chart shows monthly claims in 2024 and 2025 and it shows much higher 2025 was from 2024. If you look at March 2025 were more than double what 2024 was. April was almost double 2024. May was way more than double 2024. This is what we were looking at last year. Claims were up an average of 94 percent per month. We had numerous meetings with Blue Cross trying to figure out what we were doing, meeting with our insurance broker. We took a number of steps, we put a number of measures in. Beginning in July, we started to see relief. You see what a difference it made after July. We went from averaging 94 percent increases to averaging only 5 percent increases. That's good news. Now, when we found out last December that because the claims were so high in the beginning of the year, they were raising our insurance by 48 percent. You convened a special meeting of the Council, we talked about it, you wanted additional measures taken to put a lid on this so beginning in January of 2026 we had Blue Cross put in another layer. What they did, at their own cost, they put in another stop gap measure where they put another level of oversight for certain out of network claims, the claims that were driving up our high increases. So far this year in 2026, we are running pretty far below last year. I don't know this for a fact but judging by what I read, it wouldn't surprise me if we were the only municipality in New Jersey whose medical claims right now in 2026 are running less than 2025. Medical costs don't go down. They do go up. All of this is good news for us for 2027. It can't change the 2026 budget. The 2026 budget is based on claim data from 2025. Not to budget based on the 2025 data would be irresponsible. We would be gambling with public money. That would not be good sound budgeting

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practices, but it does look good for 2027. The claim activity that we are looking at for the last 9 months is going to translate into a much lower insurance premium for 2027. We are doing as much as we can but it looks well for 2027. Back to the spending increase, 7.1 million, of that 6.3 are the health benefits and our bill from the Bergen County Utilities Authority which handles all the sewerage in the city. It gets collected in our sewer system and gets piped to the BCUA treatment plant in Little Ferry and that bill is up $900,000 from a rate increase from them. Our actual usage is down from last year but that's a massive rate increase and other municipalities in Bergen County are feeling the same thing. That is out of our control. But those two items add up to 7.2 million. Our total spending is up 7.1 million. That means the entire rest of the budget, all of our other spending within our control down is actually down $100,000. That is within our control. We tried to cut spending wherever we could to try to mitigate that increase as much as we could. You will note that the transfer to the Board Of Education is not part of that increase. We cut where we could, still keeping in mind that we still have to include in the budget the areas you wanted to see. Since you came in office, there has been a change in city government. There are priorities, a shift in priorities and areas of the government have been shifted. There have been a number of areas that were neglected for years that we are now taken care of and should have been taken care of years ago. For example, snow removal. We were able to use the snow removal trust but over the last 6-7 years, we have been cutting the snow removal budget and haven't been replenishing the trust. Right now, the trust is lower. We need to fix that by increase the budget. It should have happened years ago. Similarly, we put a lot of money into our pump stations. Our Project Manager has been recommending for the last few years that we increase the budget for maintenance and monitoring, protect our investment. He wasn't in charge of the department until recently so we have increased and granted his budget request because he is right. We do need to protect that investment. We are investing in DPW heavy duty vehicles, we bought garbage trucks this past December. The library donation, the City donates every year to the library. We have decreased the donation every year for the last 10 years or kept it flat and I don't remember the last time it was ever increased. They do a great job and the library does an excellent job of using their own money for the renovations they are doing. They don't rely on city money. This year, for the first time in I don't know how many years, they will see an increase in the donation. The police department has been operating for the last few years with operational structural deficit. That needs an explanation. A structural deficit occurs when if something doesn't change in the police budget at some point, the money won't be there to handle something in the budget and the structure is going to collapse. What will be needed is a massive infusion of cash that can only come from taxes so it needs to be addressed now. It is one of those pay me now or pay me later. You need to pay now because if you pay later it will be huge. I recognized this a few years ago but wasn't able to take care of it and the Chief recognized it and wasn't able to take care of it. We both agreed this year that this has to be taken care of. The reason is in last few years, we made a huge investment in technology equipment. It is impressive. A lot of computers, surveillance, drones, body worn cameras, a lot of technology equipment purchased with federal forfeiture money. Money that comes from the federal government when they do a drug bust and seize the money and distribute it to local governments. We took advantage and bought a lot of equipment. It didn't hit our budget but that equipment needs to be maintained and you need maintenance contracts. We need a budget for that. The budge for that is large. That has to be put in. Also, there has never been a plan to improve the police building so the chief and I met and we talked about amending the capital plan to make improvements to the police building, similar to a plan the City Manager and I did with the fire houses back in 2016. We will be amending the capital plan to start taking care of that this year. Finally, we need to do something about police vehicles. The fleet is old and small, we need more cars and we need them modernized and we need something in place so this happens on a regular basis. We put money in the budget 10 years ago for police cars and the budget has never kept up with the rising cost of cars, so what happened is the number of cars on the road every year gets smaller and the cars get older. If that keeps happening, eventually there's going to be one old car driving around town. I met with the Chief and Captain Zisa and to fix this, we implemented a lease to own program. It is on a seven year cycle. We will be leasing

10 cars and every year in cycle we will replenish it with 5 new cars every year which will constantly bring in new cars and retire the old ones. By the end of 2032, we will have 35 cars that are less than 6 years old and that will address finally the issues we have with police cars. In addition to the cuts we have made to try to keep the increase down as much as possible, there are other operational savings. The position of Police Director has been eliminated. There is a very large savings in police salary and wage budget because that was a very large salary. Similarly, in the DPW, the DPW superintendent position changed from one full time to two part time which saves on health benefits and given the cost of benefits, that is now a savings. Any time we can change a position from full time to part time and save on the health benefits, it will be significant. There was always a duty overlap of field maintenance between recreation and DPW. We have a new recreation superintendent so we have worked out that duty overlap. We are doing a very close monitoring of legal bills including legal bills by our insurance broker which has never happened before. I always say when people know that you are looking, they get sharper with their pencil. Salaries and wages are at 48.3 million which is a 3.1 increase from last year which is a little higher than usual and the reason for that is because for the last 3 years we have been operating with a SAFER grant from 2022 which paid for the salaries of 5 firefighters. It was a 3 years grant so they were paid for in previous budgets. It is now expired so the full salary of those 5 firefighters has to be absorbed in the budget. That is the reason why it is a little higher. The department other expenses is down 5 percent from last year. This is where we made the most cuts and this is there our department heads are very good at holding the line on spending year after year. They do very good holding the spending. Statutory expenses is a large part of the budget at 14.3 million. These are expenses we have to make – pension, social security, unemployment. We used to see huge increases in this that we don't have control over but for the last few years including this year, we haven't seen large increases. This year is relatively flat from last. To sum up, the 2026 budget, the tax increase does translate on average home to $48.13 per month. The budget spending is up $7.1 million and that is because of our health benefits up $6.3 million and our BCUA bill is up $900,000 but the rest of the budget is down $100,000. Along with that, poor budget decisions from last year led to a missed revenue projection of $1.6 million. When you miss a revenue projections, it has to be made up in the following year budget. There is only one way you can make up non-tax revenue and that is with tax revenue and that has to happen in the 2026 budget. That is extremely unfortunate. Finally, in the 2026 budget proper fiscally conversative budgeting practices are now back in place which will prevent that problem which happened in 2025 and impacted 2026. That will prevent that from happening in 2027. On a somewhat personal note, this is my 13th budget with the city and over the years I haven't spent more time talking about anything more than tax stabilization. The thing to avoid always are wide fluctuations from one year to another and the way to do that is by always looking ahead in your budget to the next year and that didn't happen last year and I commend you as a Council for doing that this year and bringing us back to those proper fiscally conservative budgeting practices and putting us back on track. That is how we will hold the line on tax increases next year. That is the budget. The public hearing is scheduled for next Council meeting on May 5th at 5:30. Assuming we receive state approval by then, after the public hearing later that night you will be voting to adopt the budget. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Councilman Carroll – How much is in the police forfeiture fund?

CFO Mangin responded – I am not exactly sure. It could be at least $4 million.

Councilman Carroll – And you want us to pay for new police cars?

CFO Mangin responded – Yes. The reason for that is because it is $4 million today but it won't always be.

Deputy Mayor Toomey responded - I kept hearing you say that this should have been done a certain way but wasn't. Since we got in, things have been improving, correct? Why? For example, when you gave the example in 2022, 2023, three years in a row,

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evaluations dropped. Why when it dropped for the 3rd year, why continue on the same pattern of the PILOTs if it wasn't working?

CFO Jim Mangin – I haven't been part of the redevelopment discussions.

Deputy Mayor Toomey responded - But you are the CFO.

CFO Jim Mangin – Similar to that you are the finance committee and I would report it to the finance committee, and would report every year the drop in valuations but I wasn't part of the redevelopment discussions but I would report to the finance committee.

Deputy Mayor Toomey responded - Why weren't you part of those important discussions?

CFO Jim Mangin – You can draw your own conclusions. You are exactly right. That is a failed policy. If the valuations are dropping, why do a policy that drops them?

Deputy Mayor Toomey responded – Also, poor budget decisions regarding local revenue from the 2025 postponed a 2025 increase to 2026. So, poor decisions were made and by whom and why were those decisions made?

CFO Jim Mangin – I do the budget but a budget is a policy. I have a lot to do with the budget but I don't have the final say on the budget. For example, if you wanted me to do it, you say to me you don't want a 10 percent tax increase, cut it. I could cut it in the areas where we would have to cut and not be able to do the things that you want. Ultimately, it is your decision. Last year, here is the budget and here is the tax increase. Ultimately, it is the Council's decision. If that tax increase is too high, go back and cut either appropriations or increase revenue. Either one will lower the tax levy.

Mayor Gaines responded – So, going off the Deputy Mayor's question. Last year, there was $1.6 million in this revenue projection. I am curious about, in this draft process where you have conversations with the previous iteration of the finance committee, which is a part of the previous Council, can you illuminate what contributed to those missed projections? Was there a more responsible budget that was presented and that got whittled away into a more irresponsible budget? What assurances does the public have that this won't happen again?

CFO Jim Mangin – I had said this budget is a return to proper fiscally conversative budgeting practices. Proper fiscally conservative budgeting practices would be that when you project revenue, you project how much is coming in and what you want to do is project revenue to be a little less than what you actually think is going to come in, because if you miss that projection, you are impacting next year. You want to make sure that you lowball the number. Under the law, you are allowed to anticipate exactly as much that came in the year before. That is not a good practice. That is not fiscally conservative budgeting. You want to come in lower. In certain areas like fees and permits or construction revenue, you really want to come in lower because you don't know why that number was up there. There could have been a one-time event. You want to make sure you really do lowball that number. That is proper budgeting. That is not what happened last year. Those two areas, fees and permits, and construction revenue, which are substantial revenue sources or non-tax revenue sources were brought up to the absolute maximum and then like I said, the numbers didn't come in to the tune of 1.6 million. In this budget, we have to anticipate less but now reinstitute proper fiscally conservative budgeting practices and lower it even more to get us back on track.

Mayor Gaines responded – It sounds to me like there was a desire to get to a certain number optically as opposed to a desire to properly budget and fund the city government. It also sounds to me like there was data that was presented. You can see the health care costs. You can see the valuations were going down. You can see that ratables were coming off the tax rolls and yet, the governing body who voted on the budget insisted on living in a sort of la la land and ignoring that heath care costs were rising, ignoring that ratables were going down, and sticking to this policy of issuing 30 year PILOTs that did not actually attract ratables, all they seemed to attract was more 30 year PILOTs. It seems like now that we have the things that are within our control in terms of taking $100,000 out of the budget in terms of spending while also funding the things that need to be funded and not letting things atrophy like have been done for the last however many years. There is a price that is being paid now for last year's budget which if my memory serves, was an election year, by coincidence. I don't remember the alarm ever being sounded that health care costs were climbing by 94 percent in the run up to a municipal election, no one said it. Everything was wonderful. Then that red line in the graph of the health care costs, is when we are here. That is when things started trending downward, coincidentally. So, I don't want anyone to be confused on Hackensack Happenings, not coincidentally, actually, because things have been put in place. I just want to make clear that, if I am misunderstanding anything jump in.

CFO Jim Mangin responded – If you are, I'll jump in but I haven't jumped in yet.

Mayor Gaines responded – I want to be clear about what is contributing to this. That this is based on 2025's spend and it is not even all of 2025 because we were able to collectively put things in place to rein in the things that technically should be outside of our control.

CFO Jim Mangin responded – The first 6 months of 2025 were so bad that is what impacted our increase in our premium. That is how bad that was. Had they looked at the entire year of 2025, I truly believe that they only looked at the first half and said how high can we raise this premium? Someone said well, raise it 75% and someone said no, their contract says they can only go 50%. They said okay well 48%. I believe that is what happened.

Mayor Gaines responded – Regarding the PILOTS, because they come off the tax rolls, they are really a double whammy. One, they are bringing down the commercial valuations because the big properties, the credit union site, Bruce the Bed King, Sears, large entities that come off the rolls and hurt valuations, but then also, because of their payment schedule, they're a fixed cost. When you have these increases in health care, the increases are born by everyone else in the tax pool.

CFO Jim Mangin responded – They get a built in tax freeze. The PILOTs that were issued two years ago that are still being built, they are paying 2023 tax rates.

Mayor Gaines responded – Based on negotiated 2018-2019 numbers.

CFO Jim Mangin responded – They are paying the taxes from the year before the exemption was granted. They are going to keep paying those taxes until they start leasing. You are right. That is what I am saying when I said you have to look at the entirety, and not just laser in on the revenue number, look at the whole thing. What we said before about the way PILOTs are billed is another example. We are changing the way PILOTs are billed. The way we are changing the way the PILOTs are billed which will bring in more revenue in 2026 which will help our surplus which will help the 2027 budget but it can't help the 2026 budget because we can only anticipate what came in last year. Look at everything.

Councilman Diaz responded – I am not quite clear, you said that the monthly medical claims were sky high in the first 6 months of the year and you saw it was necessary to implement some measure for the second part of the year. Am I correct?

CFO Jim Mangin - Yes, that is correct.

Councilman Diaz responded – So what did you implement in the second half of the year that couldn't be implemented on the first half?

CFO Jim Mangin - If you see the claims in January, February, March. It was in March when we sounded the alarm bells. It was in April when we started meeting regularly and in May when we started meeting with Blue Cross. We couldn't go back to first of the year. In terms of what we implemented, remember we can't change coverage. That all has to be negotiated. When I looked at the claims, it wasn't the in network in the problem because in network all those costs are negotiated so they were not the problem. It was the out of network claims. We zeroed in on where the problem was and working with Blue Cross, that's what we targeted.

Councilman Diaz responded – But still in January, February, and March, it went up and then came down in April. It went up again in May.

CFO Jim Mangin - The changes didn't kick in until July.

Councilman Diaz responded – So in March, you still didn't know for sure what was going on that we couldn't avoid like whatever happened in May.

CFO Jim Mangin - All we knew was that it was going up. In March it went up huge. May it went really big.

Mayor Gaines responded – I just want to be clear. We in March of 2025 was the city, not us sitting up here.

Deputy Mayor Toomey responded – I have a question. Finishing up with the medical claims, typically I don't understand exactly what drove all the claims in that period of time January through June but typically, don't you get more medical claims in end of year because usually in January people are trying to meet their deductible and then towards the end of year, people try to get all their medical appointments done by the end of the year.

CFO Jim Mangin – I thought the exact same thing and I talked to our broker when we got the data and I said things should taper off in January and he said claims shoot up in January. I said well that doesn't make sense because people have to meet their deductible. I would think that once the deductible is met, then they will go with more frequency. He said no, what we see is that to meet their deductible, they go with more frequency. That surprised me. I can't see that in the data. But I thought the exact same thing. I go in network so you can't base it on me.

Councilwoman Clark Collins responded – Could you explain to us how the 10.25 percent increase is going to be applied to taxpayers because it is not just a matter of taking your total tax bill and multiplying it by 10 percent?

CFO Jim Mangin – The 10.25% is the increase to the levy. When you do a budget, you start with how much money you need to spend. In our case, the total budget is $146 million. That is how much money we have to spend and then you take in how much money is coming in that is not taxes from everything – fees, permits, court costs, everything that is not taxes. You take all of that and that is $44 million and you subtract that from the budget. That leaves $101 million. That's the tax levy. That tax levy is 10.25% higher than what it was last year. That doesn't mean anyone's tax bill is going up 10.25%. It just means that the levy, the portion of the budget which is paid for with taxes, is 10 percent more than last year. What will happen is that levy, the $101 million dollars will then get divided into our total valuations, and that will generate a tax rate. I am protecting to be 3.518. You take your home and it's assessment and you would apply the tax rate and that would be the tax bill. Next month in May, we will do a resolution for estimated tax bills and when we go the resolution for estimated tax bills, I will be projecting just that, an estimated tax rate. Don't go by my rate, it is just my notes. Next month I will be doing that whole exercise.

Councilwoman Clark Collins responded – The final bill comes out in August?

CFO Jim Mangin – The estimated bill comes out in August because the county is late. They are always what we are waiting for. The county comes out with their final in August so in September we send the final bill. We make the adjustment to the estimate and we fix it in the fourth quarter. That is called the final bill.

Councilwoman Clark Collins responded – Going back to your poor budget decisions, you had said that because of missed revenue which would be the non-tax revenue, so in that non-tax revenue is fees, permits, construction permits, etc. Also the health benefits but you explained how you have corrected the benefit problem. How do you plan to correct the permits fees, permits, and construction costs and so on?

CFO Jim Mangin – Because of what happened last year, now our hands are tied on what we can anticipate in 2026. We can only anticipate what comes in. But, to restore proper budgeting practices we are going to deliberately lower that number to a number we know we will hit, so we don't have this same problem next year. That is how we will fix that problem and that is what should have happened last year.

Councilwoman Clark Collins responded – Are we doing type of evaluations on fees and permits and construction costs to see they are in alignment with other municipalities?

CFO Jim Mangin – Yes, earlier this year the City Manager at a department head meeting had all the department heads to review their fees, look at all the surrounding communities, make recommendations to change our fee ordinance whenever possible. That is done every year.

Councilwoman Clark Collins responded – Is there anything else we can look at?

CFO Jim Mangin – We are always on the lookout for new revenue. New revenue is great. Cannabis revenue goes up every year. That is good. We are always trying to look for anywhere we can get new revenue or a fee. We are always looking for any place to get a fee.

Mayor Gaines – I just want to make very clear for everyone, that 10.25 number is not take your bill and multiply that by 10.25. There is a number in the presentation. I believe it is about $48.13 for the municipal portion of your bill and that is on the average home. It is not the same impact that the number might purport. That is the number on the tax levy. I want to make that clear. Thank you Mr. Mangin.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT (ON AGENDA ITEMS):

A motion to open the meeting to the public was offered by Deputy Mayor Toomey seconded by Councilman Diaz.

Sergi Tolstoy – This is in response to Mr. Mangin's budget presentation. The division of local government services is now reviewing what the new mayor of Jersey City asked all his departments to cut 10 percent of their budget. They held community meetings of each ward to discuss the budget and welcome a fiscal monitor that would come with transitional aid. Saying, "we have assembled a broad unified collation of elected leaders from across Hudson County, business leaders, union leaders, and community leaders. We are asking the state to provide at least 150 million dollars in transitional aid to Jersey City's 2026 budget." He said we view this as a bridge to unburden the Jersey City taxpayers. Paterson has gotten from the state in any of the previous 15 years, and in the past 3 years, they have received between 25 million to 29 million dollars in transitional aid from the state. Paterson state aid application listed the budget items with the largest increase. 24 million for health insurance. 4.7 for fire salaries. 4 for the police salaries and million for the solid waste disposal and about a half million for workers comp claims. The city he said would face an untenable choice either impose tax levy increases or pursue reductions that would severely compromise the public safety and essential operations. I ask that we look at these things that are provided for in the state statutes and use them effectively, rather than burden Hackensack residents. Thank you.

Fred Miller – Looking over the budget, I saw there is $135 million in debt with 16 million roughly in anticipated interest for an annual interest rate at 11.8 percent which is gross to the taxpayer. We should look at restructuring our debt to more favorable rate, even if we got a rate at 6 percent which would be 8 million in realized savings. Looking at other areas to bring in revenue outside of PILOTs, the county has their hands in our pockets like none other. The jail and homeless shelter contribute nothing. If you have a hotel, you pay an occupancy tax which goes to the city. Passaic sends $122 dollars a day inmates to our jail. Those inmates are released on our streets. There is something that should come back to city as revenue for this trouble. Looking at salaries and benefits. I work in the private sector, I pay a lot. I don't care that it is only 50 a month, we are anticipating county taxes, utilities, insurance in other areas auto and life, whatever it may be. Everything is going up. Every penny counts. Looking at what our employees of the city continue and what people in the private sector contribute, if there is an increase to heath care, are they contributing accordingly? The median income for a household with a family in Hackensack is $108,000, and many of our public servants make twice the median family income. I propose that there is no cost of living adjustments until that comes in line with the reality of people around us. Outside of that, services provided to the city, if you are going to raise taxes and provide these exorbitant salaries, you need to be better. Our school districts, when you look at realty.com, need to be above a 4/10. When you look at police on their details, they should not be in their car, on their phone, they should be out directing traffic. I don't care if its a side street or a busy street. It is a slap in the face and there are a lot of problems I see commuting around town. You got new garbage trucks, I can show you pictures on my phone. Every week recycling, can you please not spill it in the street and pick it up. That is not acceptable to me with the taxes I pay. With that, I ask that we figure ways to do better and not burden us when we are already the highest paying taxpayers in the county.

Rev. Robert Coles – Let me give my comments to the administration and also to the CFO, who bravely stood here and took all of that. I want to address the professional presentation part of the agenda. I am going to read through some notes, some of which you already covered. One thing I would say is I would hope that this administration would give this man a lot more power than he appeared to have in the previous administration. Some of the questions that were asked, he should have been able to answer and it seemed like he wasn't or he didn't know or couldn't say. He should be telling us this is what we should be doing. If this budget is short here, make it known to them so they can see it. If they still choose to go on, then that's off of you. But right now, I am not sure how much power he really had. We have PILOT programs. PILOT programs can be good, if they are managed correctly. I have a church in Montclair. They are going through the same kind of thing, but, you have to be wise in how you use them. If you have 3,000 new places for people to come and live in town, you are going to need more police, more fire. You can't be cutting police and fire. I am a 30 year resident here and never have I remembered in my 30 years someone getting shot around the corner from my house. Never do I remember someone getting stabbed in front of the police station. Never do I remember situations where people can't walk the streets safely. These places of stay are going to bring in an influx of people. Let me run down some of my notes. What are some causes of the spending increases? Medical and insurance budgets. Highest healthcare expenses. What group? What group offers the highest healthcare expenses? I think it would be police and fire, maybe not. Is it the garbage men? Do our health care contracts contain claim limits? How can you have runaway claims? The rule is there is a claim limit, you go to that limit and if it's above, you got to pay. Why reduction in claim growth around period when the new administration took over? That you Deputy Mayor for asking that question, it was eating me up. The first 4 years we saw a revenue increase for us, it was an advantage. After that, why go to 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, when you recognize a negative revenue relationship between the PILOT growth and the revenue benefit. Also, with all of this construction, why are we lowering the budget of the extra revenue? Aren't there more construction charges to people building? How can we be lowering it? The revenue increase from that experience should be higher. Those kind of worried me. I applaud you for your fiscal prudence in doing this. I think and hope you will take a bigger part in the budget process and giving us transparency on what the plan is. We can't be talking about cutting police, maybe some adjustments to health care. Thank you.

Josh Cohen - I had some questions about and comments about the Baldwin Park project. I live close to there. I walk my son who goes to school at Fairmount, we walk through twice per day. We often take nighttime walks during the summer through there. We are really familiar with it. If there is a splash pad going in, I can see us potentially making use of that but why a splash pad over other projects and how is a splash pad rooted in the community? I looked through the Open Space for Baldwin Park and this census track, we have less than 3 acres of open space in that area. You think of Fairmount, it is a little more green. We have tree lined streets but we don't have open space. Baldwin and Fairmount and Fairmount is listed in the open space plan as a passive park and Baldwin is your active park. You have 14 percent of residents under 18 and 15 percent is over the age of 65, it is the highest senior population in the city. You have a significant Spanish speaking population. We know we have a footstool court used in evening. I am curious if we reached out to people who use the space to understand how they want it to be used. I think you would be taking away that court, which would be one less field available to people. I know we are short on fields anyway as stated in the open space plan. I am not sure how it fits together. The open space plan also had pretty specific suggestions on what to do there. It said make it accessible to older people by putting in benches with backs, more seating, more shade. There is not much seating there at all. It did say to improve the paving for walking and make a walking path. I love that. It suggested doing some kind of green link between the two parks there to bring people between both with a safe way to walk. We do often walk from our house through the park to stop at the playground and go get ice cream at the other park. Having a nice way to do that would really link things together. And the school, my son is always in that park during the day for outdoor space. Fairmount doesn't have green space, they do all their events in Baldwin. Have you considered the school in any of this? Feedback from the PTA? Any feedback from the community on it? Those are my questions. Thank you.

Al Gulino – One thing I don't understand, I am 82 years old and my wife is 76. We don't understand is why we still have to pay school taxes. I don't have any kids in the school. My kids are grown. I understand I have to pay the garbage, the snow removal. By the way, the snow removal this year and the year previous, it has been 23 years since I moved to Hackensack, they clean the snow in some way to annoy everyone. I clean my driveway and five minutes later they pass the truck and block the driveway. The crosswalk is the same thing. It is my responsibility for the crosswalk because if someone falls on my sidewalk, I have problems. I have to go every 20 minutes to a half hour to clean that. It is a few things but the most annoying part is the school taxes we have to pay. I don't have any kids. My kids are big, very big. After 82 years, my kids are older than most of the people over here. It is something we would like to see you look after. Thank you for your time.

No one else wished to speak.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was offered by Councilman Carroll and seconded by Councilwoman Clark Collins

VI. NEW BUSINESS (ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS):

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 106-26

FINAL ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 05-2026, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 170 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, "VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC," TO UPDATE VARIOUS PARKING REGULATIONS

This Ordinance has been published according to law and now calls for a Public Hearing.

A motion to open to the public was offered by Councilman Carroll and seconded by Councilwoman Clark Collins.

PUBLIC HEARING: No one wished to speak.

A motion to close to the public was offered by Councilman Carroll and seconded by Councilwoman Clark Collins.

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Hackensack, County of Bergen and State of New Jersey, that Ordinance No. 05-2026 has passed its second and final reading and is hereby adopted.

CITY OF HACKENSACK
ORDINANCE NO. 05-2026

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 170 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, "VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC," TO UPDATE VARIOUS PARKING REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:48-2, the governing body of a municipality may make, amend, repeal, and enforce such other ordinances, regulations, rules and by-laws not contrary to the laws of this state or of the United States, as it may deem necessary and proper for the good of government, order and protection of person and property, and for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the municipality and its inhabitants, and as may be necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties conferred and imposed by this subtitle, or by any law; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hackensack wishes to amend Chapter 170 of the Code of the City of Hackensack, entitled "Vehicles and Traffic," to add additional on street parking on Johnson Avenue; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hackensack also wishes to amend Chapter 170 of the Code of the City of Hackensack, entitled "Vehicles and Traffic," to remove handicapped parking spaces from Section 49.2, entitled "Parking for the Handicapped;" and

WHEREAS, the Hackensack Police Department and the City Engineer have investigated the matter and have recommended these changes; and

WHEREAS, the Hackensack Police Department also wishes to clarify regulations regarding double parking for the safety of the public; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it is in the City's best interest to take this action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, as follows:

Section 1:
Chapter 170, Section 53 of the Code of the City of Hackensack is hereby amended as follows [additions by underline, deletions by ~~strikethrough~~]:

§170-53. Schedule IV: Time Limit Parking.

In accordance with the provisions of § 170-10, no person shall park a vehicle for longer than the time limit shown, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., upon any of the following streets or parts of streets:

Name of Street	**Sides**	**Time Limit**	**Location**
Johnson Avenue	Both	~~30 min.~~ 2 hrs.	From Voorhis ~~Lane~~ Place to Zabriskie Street

Section 2:
Chapter 170, Section 49.2 of the Code of the City of Hackensack is hereby amended as follows [additions by underline, deletions by ~~strikethrough~~]:

§170-49.2. Parking for the handicapped.

E. Designation of parking areas. In accordance with this chapter, the following locations shall provide parking for the physically handicapped:

Parking Lot or Street	**Side**	**Location/Number of Handicapped Spaces**
~~475 Colonial Terrace~~	~~South~~	~~From a point 276 feet west of the Esplanade to a point 20 feet west thereof/1~~
~~Pine Street~~	~~West~~	~~From a point 85 feet north of the north westerly curb line apex of Pine Street and Martin Terrace to a point 22 north thereof.~~
~~Hamilton Place~~	~~North~~	~~From a point 178 feet west of the north/west curbline apex of Hamilton Place and Vanderbeck Place to a point 22 feet north thereof/1~~

Section 3:
Chapter 170, Section 6 of the Code of the City of Hackensack is hereby amended as follows [additions by underline, deletions by ~~strikethrough~~]:

§170-6. General Parking Regulations

E. Double Parking Prohibited. It shall be unlawful for the operator of any vehicle to stop, stand, impede traffic flow, or park a vehicle on the roadway parallel of another vehicle, already stopped or parked parallel with the curb, or adjacent to, or not entirely within an empty parking space, on any street

Section 4:
Chapter 170, Section 72, Schedule XXII of the Code of the City of Hackensack is hereby amended as follows [additions by underline, deletions by ~~strikethrough~~]:

§170-72 Schedule XXII: Prohibited Right Turns on Red.

DRAFT

Pursuant to §170-170-24.1, no right turn on red on a steady red signal shall be permitted at any of the following locations:

Intersection	**Direction**
Central Avenue and State Street	East on Central Avenue to south on State Street

Section 5:
All other provisions of Chapter 170 of the Code of the City of Hackensack shall remain unchanged.

Section 6:
Repeal of Inconsistent Provisions. All ordinances or parts thereof in conflict or inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed, but only however, to the extent of such conflict or inconsistency, it being the legislative intent that all ordinances or part of ordinances now existing or in effect unless the same being conflict or inconsistent with any provision of this Ordinance shall remain in effect.

Section 7:
Severability. The provisions of this Ordinance are declared to be severable and if any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase thereof for any reason is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining sections, subsections, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Ordinance, but shall remain in effect; it being the legislative intent this Ordinance shall stand notwithstanding the invalidity of any part.

Section 8:
Codification. This Ordinance shall be a part of the Code of the City of Hackensack as though codified and fully set forth therein. The City Clerk shall have this ordinance codified and incorporated in the official copies of the Code. The City Clerk and the City Attorney are authorized and directed to change any Chapter, Article and/or Section number of the Code of the City of Hackensack in the event that the codification of this Ordinance reveals that there is a conflict between the numbers and the existing Code, and in order to avoid confusion and possible accidental repealers of existing provisions not intended to be repealed.

Section 9:
This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage, adoption, and publication in the manner prescribed by law.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey	X		X				
Clark-Collins		X	X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK
RESOLUTION NO. 107-26

FINAL ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 06-2026, AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK

This Ordinance has been published according to law and now calls for a Public Hearing.

A motion to open to the public was offered by Councilman Carroll and seconded by Deputy Mayor Toomey.

PUBLIC HEARING: No one wished to speak.

A motion to close to the public was offered by Deputy Mayor Toomey and seconded by Councilwoman Clark Collins.

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Hackensack, County of Bergen and State of New Jersey, that Ordinance No. 06-2026 has passed its second and final reading and is hereby adopted.

CITY OF HACKENSACK
ORDINANCE 06-2026
CALENDAR YEAR 2026
ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK
(N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)

WHEREAS, the Local Government Cap Law, N.J.S. 40A:4-45.1 et seq., provides that in the preparation of its annual budget, a municipality shall limit any increase in said budget to 2% unless authorized by ordinance to increase it to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, subject to certain exceptions; and,

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

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hackensack in the County of Bergen finds it advisable and necessary to increase its CY 2026 budget by up to 3.5% over the previous year's final appropriations, in the interest of promoting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby determines that a 1.5% increase in the budget for said year, amounting to $1,610,050.35 in excess of the increase in final appropriations otherwise permitted by the Local Government Cap law, is advisable and necessary; and,

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

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the City Council of the City of Hackensack, in the County of Bergen, a majority of the full authorized membership of this governing body affirmatively concurring, that, in the CY 2026 budget year, the final appropriations of the City of Hackensack shall, in accordance with this ordinance and N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14, be increased by 1.5%, amounting to $1,610,050.35 and that the CY 2026 municipal budget for the City of Hackensack be approved and adopted in accordance with this ordinance; and,

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

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

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

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey			X				
Clark-Collins			X				
Carroll	X		X				
Diaz		X	X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 108-26

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 07-2026, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 148 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, "STREETS AND SIDEWALKS," ARTICLE II, "GENERAL REGULATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS" TO CLARIFY OBSTRUCTION OF FIRE HYDRANTS

BE IT RESOLVED that the above ordinance, being Ordinance 07-2026 as introduced, does now pass on first reading and that said Ordinance shall be considered for final passage at a meeting to be held on May 5, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be reached at the regular meeting place of the City Council and at such time and place all persons interested be given an opportunity to be heard concerning said Ordinance and that the Clerk be and he is hereby authorized and directed to publish said ordinance according to law with a notice of its introduction and passage on first reading and of the time and place when and where said ordinance will be further considered for final passage.

CITY OF HACKENSACK
ORDINANCE NO. 07-2026

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 148 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, "STREETS AND SIDEWALKS," ARTICLE II, "GENERAL REGULATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS" TO CLARIFY OBSTRUCTION OF FIRE HYDRANTS

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:48-2, the governing body of a municipality may make, amend, repeal, and enforce such other ordinances, regulations, rules and by-laws not contrary to the laws of this state or of the United States, as it may deem necessary and proper for the good of government, order and protection of person and property, and for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the municipality and its inhabitants, and as may be necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties conferred and imposed by this subtitle, or by any law; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hackensack wishes to amend Chapter 148 of the Code of the City of Hackensack, entitled "Streets and Sidewalks," to clarify the general regulations and restrictions for obstructing a fire hydrant; and,

WHEREAS, the Hackensack Police Department and the Fire Department have recommended these changes; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it is in the City's best interest to take this action.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK, as follows:

Section 1:

Chapter 148, Article II, Section 16 of the Code of the City of Hackensack is hereby amended as follows [additions by underline, deletions by ~~strikethrough~~]:

§148-16 Obstruction of fire hydrants.

~~No obstruction of any kind shall be placed upon any street or public place within 10 feet of any fire hydrant, and the space around all such hydrants shall at all times within the limit aforesaid be kept open and unobstructed.~~ No person shall at any time park a motor vehicle or obstruction within a (10) ten foot perimeter of a fire hydrant or obstruct a fire drafting site or Fire Department connection/appliance at all times. The Police Department, Fire Department, or its designated agents are authorized to tow motor vehicles and remove obstructions at their discretion, at the expense of the owner.

Section 2:
All other provisions of Chapter 170 of the Code of the City of Hackensack shall remain unchanged.

Section 3:
Repeal of Inconsistent Provisions. All ordinances or parts thereof in conflict or inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed, but only however, to the extent of such conflict or inconsistency, it being the legislative intent that all ordinances or part of ordinances now existing or in effect unless the same being conflict or inconsistent with any provision of this Ordinance shall remain in effect.

Section 4:
Severability. The provisions of this Ordinance are declared to be severable and if any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase thereof for any reason is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining sections, subsections, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Ordinance, but shall remain in effect; it being the legislative intent this Ordinance shall stand notwithstanding the invalidity of any part.

Section 5:
Codification. This Ordinance shall be a part of the Code of the City of Hackensack as though codified and fully set forth therein. The City Clerk shall have this ordinance codified and incorporated in the official copies of the Code. The City Clerk and the City Attorney are authorized and directed to change any Chapter, Article and/or Section number of the Code of the City of Hackensack in the event that the codification of this Ordinance reveals that there is a conflict between the numbers and the existing Code, and in order to avoid confusion and possible accidental repealers of existing provisions not intended to be repealed.

Section 6:
This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage, adoption, and publication in the manner prescribed by law.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK
RESOLUTION NO. 109-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Hackensack that the bills in the following accounts be and are hereby ordered paid:

Current Fund $ 3,451,380.31

Grants	58,268.39
Payroll	3,897,015.14
Public Parking System	276,168.86
Capital	220,184.53
Escrow	84,784.86
Trust Account	93,398.99
Total Expenditures	8,081,201.8
Interfunds/Transfers	$8,793,507.14

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 110-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TAX REFUNDS

BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Hackensack that the proper officers be and are hereby authorized to make the following refunds for the reasons stated:

AMOUNT	BLOCK	LOT	NAME	YEAR	REASON PROP LOC
$401.62	47	21	Corelogic Refunds Dept For 160 West Street LLC 3001 Hackberry Road Irving, TX 75063	2026	Overpayment 160 West St
$97.54	443	24 C0055	Evergreen Land Title Services, Inc. 81 E State Rt 4, Suite 403 Paramus, NJ 07652	2025	Duplicate Payment BCUA Sewer Service 310 Lookout Ave

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 111-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TAX APPEAL ATTORNEY TO SETTLE THE CASES ON THE ATTACHED LIST DATED MARCH 20, 2026 THAT WERE SCHEDULED FOR TRIAL OR SETTLEMENT

WHEREAS, the names on the attached list are owners of real estate of the Block and Lots specified on said list: and

WHEREAS, the owners set forth on the list have filed tax appeals challenging the assessments for the above referenced tax years as more specifically set forth on said list; and

WHEREAS, each Block and Lot listed therein was/were assessed at the amount stated therein for the noted tax years; and

WHEREAS, the owners are seeking a reduction in the total assessments for said Block and Lots for the respective years; and

WHEREAS, the City's Tax Appeal Attorney, Edna J. Jordan, Esq. of Chasan Lamparello Mallon & Cappuzzo, P.C. has completed discovery/inquiry with respect to these matters and has consulted with the City Tax Assessor, Arthur Carlson, CTA and the City's Appraiser, McNerney & Associates, Inc. and has conducted extensive negotiations with counsel for the taxpayer; and

WHEREAS, the parties have agreed that prejudgment interest shall be waived as a condition of any and all settlements; and

WHEREAS, the City's Tax Appeal Attorneys, the City's Appraiser and the City's Tax Assessor are in agreement with the terms of said settlements and believe that it would be in the best interest of the City to settle said cases in accordance with the terms as stated on the attached list;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governing Body of the City of Hackensack agrees to authorize the City's Tax Appeal Attorney, Edna J. Jordan, Esq. to execute a Stipulation of Settlement on behalf of the City of Hackensack with respect to the cases on the attached list pending in the Tax Court of New Jersey for the tax years and at the new assessments stated on said list.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 112-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING 100% VETERAN TAX EXEMPTION FOR 60 VANDERBECK PLACE UNIT 3B

WHEREAS, a property located in the City of Hackensack, known as 60 Vanderbeck Place, Unit 3B, Hackensack, Block 429, Lot 1, Qual C003B, is assessed to Michael Dizon and;

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2025, Mr. Dizon was declared 100% exempt by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, according to the City of Hackensack Ordinance# 50-2023, the effective date of exemption is based on the date of the application of March 23, 2026; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tax Collector is hereby authorized to cancel taxes effective March 23, 2026 and issue a refund in the amount of $92.33 prorated for 7 days. The refund check will be given to the Tax Collector for mailing. This property is 100% tax exempt for 2026 effective March 23, 2026.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		**X**	**X**				
Clark-Collins	**X**		**X**				
Carroll			**X**				
Diaz			**X**				
Mayor Gaines			**X**				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 113-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING GRANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF HACKENSACK AND THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY BY AND FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GRANT IDENTIFIER GC2024-00035-PO (GREEN COMMUNITIES FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT)

The Governing Body of Hackensack City desires to further the public interest by obtaining a grant from the State of New Jersey in the amount of approximately $5,000.00 to fund the following project:

Green Communities Community Forest Management Plan Development (CFMP)

Therefore, the governing body resolves that James Mangin or the successor of the office of Chief Financial Officer is authorized (a) to make application for such a grant, (b) if awarded, to execute a grant agreement with the state for a grant in an amount not less than $0.00 and not more than $5,000.00 and (c) to execute:
_X_ any amendments thereto.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of Hackensack City authorize and hereby agree to match twenty-five percent (25%) of the Total Project Amount, in compliance with the match requirements of the agreement. The availability of the match for such purposes, whether cash, services, or property, is hereby certified. Up to one hundred percent (100%) of the required match will be provided as In-Kind services as permitted under the grant program requirements and the executed agreement.

The required match is further detailed in *Attachment A: Match Breakdown (Cash and In-Kind)*, which is appended hereto and made part of this Resolution.
The Grantee agrees to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and municipal laws, rules, and regulations in its performance pursuant to the agreement.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		**X**	**X**				
Clark-Collins	**X**		**X**				
Carroll			**X**				
Diaz			**X**				
Mayor Gaines			**X**				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 114-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION AND EXECUTE A GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE HACKENSACK PEDESTRIAN SAFETY PROJECT

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of Hackensack City formally approve the grant application for the above stated project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Clerk are hereby authorized to submit an electronic grant application identified as LTPF-2026-Hackensack Pedestrian Safety-00068 to the New Jersey Department of Transportation on behalf of Hackensack City.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of Hackensack City and that their signature constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and approves the execution of the grant agreement.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 116-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING INTRODUCTION OF MAIN STREET BUSINESS ALLIANCE, INC. 2026 BUDGET

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:56-84, the District Management Corporation known as the "Main Street Business Alliance, Inc." has submitted its proposed budget for 2026 to the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack in the amount of $728,521.00 for the purposes of introduction; and

WHEREAS, municipal approval of said budget may be conferred only upon compliance with the requested statutory notices and procedures, and not prior to a public hearing on said budget to be held not less than twenty-eight (28) days from the date of introduction;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Hackensack as follows:

1. The appropriate City Officials are hereby directed to undertake all necessary procedures set forth in N.J.S.A. 40:56-84 prior to the Public Hearing on the proposed budget; and
2. May 26, 2026 at 5:30 P.M., is hereby established as the date of the public hearing on the proposed budget, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be reached.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 117-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING RAFFLE LICENSES

BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Hackensack that the following organization(s) be granted permission to conduct a Raffle in accordance with the application on file in the office of the City Clerk:

RA #2026-15 Lodi Moose Lodge 1971

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 118-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TEMPORARY ADJUSTMENT TO CITY PARK HOURS FROM APRIL 1, 2026 THROUGH NOVEMBER 30, 2026

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 117-7 of the Code of the City of Hackensack ("Code"), all public parks are scheduled to be open from 6:00 A.M. until 9:00 P.M. yearlong; and,

WHEREAS, Section 117-7 of the Code further provides that those hours may be adjusted upon recommendation of the City Manager and upon approval by the Mayor and Council; and,

WHEREAS, the City Manager, in consultation with the Recreation Department, has recommended that due to the increased usage of City parks and the benefit of safe outdoor recreation closing times at these parks be adjusted for the period starting on April 1, 2026 through November 30, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, that it hereby authorizes Johnson Park and Foschini Park hours be from 7:00 A.M. until 11:00 P.M., from April 1, 2026 through November 30, 2026, extended from 9:00 P.M. until 11:00 P.M. for approved permit holders; and

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the closing time of all other City Parks shall be 7:00 A.M. until 10:00 P.M., from April 1, 2026 through November 30, 2026, extended from 9:00 P.M. until 10:00 P.M. for approved permit holders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no person shall enter upon or occupy any part of the park, playground or recreation area except during such hours unless such person first received a special permit obtained from the recreation department; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is directed to take whatever action he deems warranted to ensure that the adjusted closing times are properly noticed to the community-at-large.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 119-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARDING OF A CO-OP CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF INFRARED HEATERS FOR DEPT OF PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE

WHEREAS, the Hackensack Department of Public Works garage, located at 120 East Broadway, requires the replacement of fourteen (14) ceiling mounted infrared heaters; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack wishes to purchase this equipment by using the services of the Bergen County Cooperative Contract Purchasing System, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(6): and

WHEREAS, the purchase of goods and services by local contracting units is authorized by the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack wishes to utilize the Bergen County Cooperative Contract #BC-BID-24-55; and

WHEREAS, F&G Mechanical Corp. of 348 New County Road, Secaucus, NJ 07094 has been awarded Bergen County Co-Op Contract #BC-BID-24-55 as an authorized vendor under the Bergen County Cooperative Contract Purchasing System; and

WHEREAS, the Qualified Purchasing Agent recommends the utilization of this contract on the grounds that it represents the best available price; and

WHEREAS, the actual price of these fourteen (14) infrared heaters, including installation, is expected not to exceed $72,354.58.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, County of Bergen, as follows:

1. F&G Mechanical Corp. of 348 County Road, Secaucus, NJ 07094, is hereby awarded a contract in the amount not to exceed $72,354.58 for the purchase of fourteen (14) infrared heaters, including installation.

2. A Certification of Funds has been prepared by the Chief Financial Officer for the said contract assuring that a sufficient appropriation exists of $11,300 in budget account C-04-24-035-000-500; and $11,000 in budget account C-04-24-044-000-500; and $50,054.58 in budget account C-04-24-044-000-100 to fund the purchases authorized in this

resolution as an express and mandatory condition of the award of this contract.

3. The Mayor and City Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the contract documents necessary to effectuate the award of this contract. The City Attorney shall review any and all contractual documents prepared in the furtherance of this award.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 120-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARDING OF A CO-OP CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO (2) BAR RAKE ASSEMBLIES FOR THE AXIAL FLOW PUMPS LOCATED AT THE EAST KENNEDY PUMP STATION

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack is committed alleviating flooding conditions throughout the City, and is currently upgrading and improving the East Kennedy Pump Station by installing two (2) new Axial Flow Pumps, and now requires to replace and install two (2) Cont-Flo bar screen rake assemblies of said pumps as part of this upgrade; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack wishes to purchase this equipment and these services by using the services of the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-11(6): and

WHEREAS, the purchase of goods and services by local contracting units is authorized by the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-12; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack wishes to utilize the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System Contract #B454-24 Various Manufacturer Pumps and Motor Repair & Replacement; and

WHEREAS, Rapid Pump & Meter Services, Co. of 285 Straight St., Paterson, NJ 07509 has been awarded North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System Contract #B454-24 as an authorized vendor under the North Jersey Wastewater Cooperative Pricing System; and

WHEREAS, the Qualified Purchasing Agent recommends the utilization of this contract on the grounds that it represents the best available price; and

WHEREAS, the actual price of these two (2) Cont-Flo bar screen rake assemblies, and all labor, materials, and equipment, is expected not to exceed $95,700.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, County of Bergen, as follows:

1. Rapid Pump & Meter Services, Co. of 285 Straight St., Paterson, NJ 07509 is hereby awarded a contract in the amount not to exceed $95,700 for the purchase of two (2) Cont-Flo bar screen rake assemblies, in accordance with attached proposal.

2. A Certification of Funds has been prepared by the Chief Financial Officer for the said contract assuring that a sufficient appropriation in budget account C-04-25-021-000-700 exists to fund the purchases authorized in this resolution as an express and mandatory condition of the award of this contract.

DRAFT

3. The Mayor and City Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the contract documents necessary to effectuate the award of this contract. The City Attorney shall review any and all contractual documents prepared in the furtherance of this award.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 121-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SETTLEMENT OF THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION MATTER FILED BY JAMES LUTHER, PENDING IN THE NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF WORKER'S COMPENSATION, CASE NO. 2021-8394

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack ("City") is the Respondent in a worker's compensation matter (Case No. 2021-8394), filed by Petitioner James Luther and,

WHEREAS, the City's Worker's Compensation Attorney, Joseph Biancamano of Biancamano & Di Stefano, P.C. has recommended settlement of this matter and have advised the Mayor and Council that the Worker's Compensation Court has determined that the terms of the proposed settlement are fair and just; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council agree that settlement of this matter is appropriate and desire to formally approve same; and,

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer certifies that there are sufficient and legally appropriated funds available in budget account 6-01-23-215-215-211 to fund a settlement amount not to exceed $184,110, less Section 40 credits of $95,864.26, leaving a balance due in the amount of $88,245.74. Petitioner's attorney was awarded a counsel fee of $29,152.00, which is payable $22,093.00 by respondent. Dr. was allowed $300.00 by respondent. A stenographic fee of $74.00 is payable by the respondent.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The above recitals are hereby incorporated as if restated herein in full.

2. The Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack find and determine that it is in the best interests of the City to accept the recommendation of its claims adjusters, defense attorneys, and City Attorney and settle Worker's Compensation Case No. 2021-8394 in an amount not to exceed $184,110.00, inclusive of counsel and other fees and costs to be awarded by the Worker's Compensation Court.

3. The City Manager, City Attorney, and the City's claims adjusters and defense attorneys are authorized and directed to take all necessary and appropriate action to effectuate the settlement.

4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 122-26

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK AUTHORIZING THE SETTLEMENT OF THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION MATTER FILED BY MICHAEL BRANCATO, PENDING IN THE NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF WORKER'S COMPENSATION, CASE NO. 2024-12553

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack ("City") is the Respondent in a worker's compensation matter (Case No. 2024-12553), filed by Petitioner Michael Brancato and,

WHEREAS, the City's Worker's Compensation Attorney Kohar Boyajian, Esq., of DAME Legal has recommended settlement of this matter and have advised the Mayor and Council that the Worker's Compensation Court has determined that the terms of the proposed settlement are fair and just; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council agree that settlement of this matter is appropriate and desire to formally approve same; and,

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer certifies that there are sufficient and legally appropriated funds available in budget account 6-01-23-215-215-211 to fund a settlement amount not to exceed $113,930, along with counsel and other fees and costs in the approximate amount of $18,664 for a total settlement amount of $132,594 to be awarded by the Worker's Compensation Court, under account number 6-01-23-215-215-211.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey as follows:

1. The above recitals are hereby incorporated as if restated herein in full.

2. The Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack find and determine that it is in the best interests of the City to accept the recommendation of its claims adjusters, defense attorneys, and City Attorney and settle Worker's Compensation Case No. 2024-12553 in an amount not to exceed $132,594, inclusive of counsel and other fees and costs to be awarded by the Worker's Compensation Court.

3. The City Manager, City Attorney, and the City's claims adjusters and defense attorneys are authorized and directed to take all necessary and appropriate action to effectuate the settlement.

4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 123-26

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF HACKENSACK AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A USED TOWER LADDER TRUCK FROM THE BOROUGH OF FAIR LAWN AS A RESERVE/BACK-UP

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5 of the Local Public Contracts Law provides exceptions to the requirement that public entities go out to bid for purchases over the bid threshold amount; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(2) specifically provides that a municipality may negotiate a contract that exceeds the bid threshold without public advertising for bids for a contract made with another municipality; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack Fire Chief has recommended that the City purchase a 2008 KME Ladder Truck VIN No. 1K9AF6483N058423 to be used as a reserve/back up truck for $159,000.00 from the Borough of Fair Lawn; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Financial Officer has certified that funds are available in budget account C-04-25-021-000-500 to fund the purchase authorized in this resolution as an express and mandatory condition of the award of the contract.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, in the County of Bergen, State of New Jersey as follows:

1. That the Mayor is authorized to enter into a contract to purchase the 2008 KME Ladder Truck from the Borough of Fair Lawn for $159,000 without the need for public biding as permitted by N.J.S.A 40A:11-5(2);

2. The City Manager is hereby granted authority to take all steps necessary and proper to give effect to this.

3. That a copy of this resolution be sent to the City of Hackensack Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management and Police Department.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 124-26

RESOLUTION OF NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW JERSEY HOUSING AND MORTGAGE FINANCE AGENCY LAW OF 1983, AS AMENDED (N.J.S.A. 55:14K-1 ET SEQ.), AND THE RULES PROMULGATED THEREUNDER AT N.J.A.C. 5:80-1.1. ET SEQ.

WHEREAS, Regan Development Corp. (hereinafter referred to as the "Sponsor") proposes to construct an affordable housing project comprised of approximately 57 units (hereinafter referred to as the "Project") pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency Law of 1983, as amended (N.J.S.A. 55: 14K-1 et seq.), the rules promulgated thereunder at N.J.A.C. 5:80-1.1 et seq., and all applicable guidelines promulgated thereunder (the foregoing hereinafter collectively referred to as the "HMFA Requirements") within the City of Hackensack (hereinafter referred to as the "Municipality") on a site described as Lots 20 and 21 in Block 10719 as shown on the Official Assessment Map of the City of Hackensack, Bergen County, New Jersey and which is situated at 89-95 Essex Street; and

WHEREAS, the Project will be subject to the HMFA Requirements and the mortgage and other loan documents between the Sponsor and the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (hereinafter referred to as the “Agency”); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the HMFA Requirements, the governing body of the Municipality hereby determines that there is a need for this housing project in the Municipality.

WHEREAS, the governing body further finds this location particularly suitable due to the close proximity of public transportation

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, County of Bergen, that:

1. The Council finds and determines that the Project proposed by the Sponsor which will construct affordable rental housing in the City of Hackensack on a site described as Lots 20 and 21 in Block 10719, and commonly known as 89-95 Essex Street, Hackensack, New Jersey meets or will meet an existing housing need;

2. The Council does hereby adopt the within Resolution and makes the determination and findings herein contained by virtue of, pursuant to, and in conformity with the provisions of the HMFA Law to enable the Agency to process the Sponsor’s application for Agency funding to finance the Project.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey		X	X				
Clark-Collins	X		X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz			X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 125-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TAX APPEAL ATTORNEY TO SETTLE THE CASES ON THE ATTACHED LIST DATED APRIL 20, 2026 THAT WERE SCHEDULED FOR TRIAL OR SETTLEMENT

WHEREAS, the names on the attached list are owners of real estate of the Block and Lots specified on said list: and

WHEREAS, the owners set forth on the list have filed tax appeals challenging the assessments for the above referenced tax years as more specifically set forth on said list; and

WHEREAS, each Block and Lot listed therein was/were assessed at the amount stated therein for the noted tax years; and

WHEREAS, the owners are seeking a reduction in the total assessments for said Block and Lots for the respective years; and

WHEREAS, the City's Tax Appeal Attorney, Edna J. Jordan, Esq. of Chasan Lamparello Mallon & Cappuzzo, P.C. has completed discovery/inquiry with respect to these matters and has consulted with the City Tax Assessor, Arthur Carlson, CTA and the City's Appraiser, McNerney & Associates, Inc. and has conducted extensive negotiations with counsel for the taxpayer; and

WHEREAS, the parties have agreed that prejudgment interest shall be waived as a condition of any and all settlements; and

WHEREAS, the City's Tax Appeal Attorneys, the City's Appraiser and the City's Tax Assessor are in agreement with the terms of said settlements and believe that it would be in the best interest of the City to settle said cases in accordance with the terms as stated on the attached list;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governing Body of the City of Hackensack agrees to authorize the City's Tax Appeal Attorney, Edna J. Jordan, Esq. to execute a Stipulation of Settlement on behalf of the City of Hackensack with respect to the cases on the attached list pending in the Tax Court of New Jersey for the tax years and at the new assessments stated on said list.

Mayor Gaines – Any discussion on resolution 115-26?

Councilwoman Clark Collins – I ask that the splash pad be pulled because it needs more discussion. As the Council representative for the Recreation Board, they are the one who recommended the splash park. We had discussed several options for the area that is in discussion, a closed in area that right now has nothing in it. The board discussed what can we put there. We thought a splash park would be a good idea. But apparently there are concerns and justifiable. I want to take this time to make clear that it has been said that we need to fix the things we already have. The splash pad is part of an additional grant. There is a grant in place that is fixing Baldwin Park. I wanted to make that clear. This is an addition to what is already being planned for Baldwin Park. I want to pull it because we have a meeting coming up in two weeks, we meet every first Wednesday of each month, the Recreation Board. I would like to invite everyone to that meeting, it is open to the public just like every other meeting. It is at 6PM on Wednesday the 6th. We can revisit the splash pad. One thing I did realize because of a letter that was sent from a resident is that there is no bathroom facility in that park which would probably be needed for a splash park. We have splash parks in other parks, do you know how many? I know there is one in Carver.

City Manager responded – We have on in Polifly which services the south end of the city. We have one in Carver which services the center. That is why it was believed that on in the northern part of the city would service the rest of the residents equally.

Councilwoman Clark Collins – As far as I know, there have been no legal incidents. I want to make that clear.

City Manager responded - I will just add, this was not looking to ram something down the neighborhood's throats. This was really what we perceived as to be a positive. If that's not the case, we certainly as the Councilwoman said, the Rec Board can revisit that.

Mayor Gaines – Can I ask, is there any deadline, limitation to this grant, any reason why we need to take or should take action now, or is this something in terms of the specs of the grant, we can table and revisit?

City Manager responded – I know there was a deadline.

Acting City Clerk Hoffman – There is an application deadline of the 24th of April to submit for this grant opportunity, beyond that I don't know.

Deputy City Clerk Saabye – The notification for the public hearing was specific to the splash pad which was needed for the application. We would have to start over again if we changed the project scope.

Mayor Gaines – How much is the grant for?

Deputy City Clerk Saabye – $247,000.

Acting City Clerk Hoffman – In total, $498,000 but it was the overall project and we pay half so the grant would be $248,000 roughly.

City Attorney responded – It is my understanding, we could apply and then ultimately reject the grant. Is that accurate?

City Manager responded – I believe that is the case. There is no guarantee we get awarded the grant.

City Attorney responded – If you got it and didn't want it, you could reject it.

City Manager responded – I believe so.

Mayor Gaines responded – Just so I am clear, because of the noticing requirement, we have to notice and have a public hearing, but because of the deadline to file for the grant, it sounds like there really is not the ability to have a plan B because we wouldn't be able to notice and wouldn't be able to submit.

City Manager responded - I believe the prudent thing to do is to pass this and if the public and the Rec advisory committee decides to go a different route, we can just withdraw our application.

Council Member	Intro	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recused
Deputy Mayor Toomey			X				
Clark-Collins		X	X				
Carroll			X				
Diaz	X		X				
Mayor Gaines			X				

CITY OF HACKENSACK

RESOLUTION NO. 115-26

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE BERGEN COUNTY OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION, FARMLAND & HISTORIC PRESERVATION TRUST FUND FOR THE BALDWIN PARK SPLASH PAD PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Bergen County Open Space, Recreation, Floodplain Protection, Farmland & Historic Preservation Trust Fund ("County Trust Fund"), provides matching grants to municipal governments and to nonprofit organizations for assistance in the development or redevelopment of outdoor municipal recreation facilities; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack desires to further the public interest by obtaining a matching grant of approximately $247,075.00 from the County Trust Fund for the construction of a splash pad at Baldwin Park; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack have reviewed the County Trust Fund Program Statement, and the Trust Fund Municipal Program Park Improvement application and instructions, and desire to submit an application for such a matching grant and provide application information and furnish such documents as may be required; and,

WHEREAS, as part of the application process, the governing body received and held the required Public Hearing to receive public comments on the proposed park improvements in the application on April 21, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Bergen shall determine whether the application is complete and in conformance with the scope and intent of the County Trust Fund; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Hackensack is willing to use the County Trust Fund in accordance with such rules, regulations and applicable statutes, and is willing to enter into an agreement with the County of Bergen for the above-named project and ensure its completion on or about the project contract expiration date.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack:

1. That it is hereby authorized to submit the above completed project application to the County by the deadline of April 24, 2026, as established by the County; and,
2. That, in the event of a County Trust Fund award that may be less than the grant amount requested above, the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack has, or will secure, the balance of funding necessary to complete the project, or modify the project as necessary; and,
3. That the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack is committed to providing a dollar for dollar cash match for the project; and,
4. That only those park improvements identified and approved in the project application, its Trust Fund contract, or other documentation will be considered eligible for reimbursement; and,
5. That the Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations in its performance of the project; and,
6. That this resolution shall take effect immediately.

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VII. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES):

A motion to open the meeting to the public was offered by Councilman Carroll and seconded by Councilman Diaz.

Doreen Fraga – I am with the Animal Protection League of New Jersey. It was brought to our attention that 20 geese were rounded up last year on City property during the molt period when geese are flightless. Someone granted permission to the USDA to access the city property and lethally kill them by gassing them. Our wildlife litigation team met with Fred from DPW, we passed a packet of information, and he was supposed to speak with the Mayor and Council and going to address the situation. We have met with him not too long ago and said that the Borough Administrator had signed off on the USDA contract and so they are going to kill the geese again. They put them in a gas chamber and gas them to death. We were asking if you can cancel the USDA contract and work with us on non-lethal solutions. There are a whole bunch that work and we have used them in Elmwood Park and Garfield. Just recently, Grand Manor Condos has cancelled the USDA. They were part of this. I have the reports. They were part of it last year and found out on Saturday that they cancelled the USDA. We are hoping the city will do the same and work with us and it is of no cost to you. This is the FOIA request that shows the amount of geese that were killed. Grand Manor the amount that were killed last year that are no longer being killed because they cancelled the USDA. All it takes is a phone call to Aaron, the state director of the USDA and then tell them you don't want the geese killed and you don't want them to have access to your property. Also, I have the letter that Grand Manor sent to the USDA and the response back where they are not going to kil the geese.

Valorie Devine – A continuation here, our wildlife litigation team specializes in working with municipalities, lake communities, corporations and developers. We have enclosed a list of non-lethal methods in the packet along with the Bergen County ordinance passed by the commissioners, stopping all lethal roundups with the USDA in all Bergen County parks and municipal lands. We hope the city will cancel the USDA and their lethal round ups. Please work with our team on non-lethal alternatives. Thank you.

Mayor Gaines – I will refer you to the City Manager to get your information and you can speak with him.

Sergi Tolstoy – I would like to have a five second moment of silence for the two individuals killed in the Bronx fire today. I would like to commend the City Council and Red Cross for doing their due diligence in implementing a free fire detector program in the City of Hackensack, something that every municipality should be doing. Senseless deaths are happening and we need to stop it. It was about four years ago; I stood before the previous Council who ran on a record of election of building a brighter future for all residents. It was an employee of a medical company, a former employee of a home comfort equipment maker, a teacher, and a youth coach and a homemaker that they worked to establish a cannabis zone in Hackensack, accept in lieu of taxes payments, provide minimum government support during tropical storm Ida, and start and push for clustered living environments. So I say today, whereas NJ state statute 40.48 -2 authorizes a municipality in NJ to make, amend, and repeal and enforce ordinances as it may deem necessary and proper for the good government, order, and protection of persons and property and for the preservation of public health, safety, and welfare of the municipality and its inhabitants. Section 31 of the Cream Act has what we call a 5-year reconsideration window which at the end of August 2026, would make it become necessary that every five years thereafter municipalities have a new 180 day period to pass an ordinance prohibiting one or more classes of the cannabis establishments. It was the previous Council and their narrative of vices upon the City of Hackensack, New Jersey, the County seat of Bergen County to implement chaos into the lives of users of such and the children, families, and the community. We need to only ask the relatives, the social workers, and the Hackensack PD and the area hospital workers of the courage that is needed by this present Council to correct this injustice.

Rich Cerbo – The traffic continues unabated on Spring Valley. It is ridiculous. If someone would come spend the day there on my porch looking at what is going on. The buses are incredibly disturbing. They are speeding. They are too heavy for that road. It was previously posted a generation ago for nothing over 4 tons. Those buses are too heavy and when they go by, and speed by, they shake every glass on the shelves in my house. It's insane. Education, we were talking about it the other day. NJ has reached the lowest point this recent year and has gone below states like Mississippi and Alabama which were traditionally lower than we were. We spend the most money here on education and we are not getting our money's worth, same thing with taxes. We spend the most here, but we don't get anything. What do we get for what we pay for? Why can't we start getting our money's worth? We are paying so much for so little, and people are getting generously paid and generous benefits and I think it is time to question that. Let's question taxes. Let's question education because we pay for that too. The education, we are not getting our money's worth, and you would know more than I do about that, Mr. Gaines. Let's cut back. Let's not spend so much. Let's spend less. Government costs too much.

Fred Miller – I want to say thank you to these two ladies as an animal lover, I would support non-lethal means as a resident. I would ask you to take them seriously and consider what they have to say. Piggybacking off of that, maybe work with Bergen County animal control, taking a walk behind the houses on Coles, which you go through Lakewood, and you could walk behind to get to Staib Park that way along the river, there is no shortage of housing and residents feeding feral cats. Maybe get them to look at non-lethal, maybe sterilization so they are not repopulating as crazy as they are. It is worth a look back there.

Councilman Carroll responded - Bergen County does not do geese control anymore.

Martin Smith – I am a member of the Condo Coop Advisory Board's traffic safety committee. Can you tell me if the Council has reached a decision on the recommendation that we made to enact a traffic safety ordinance that would make it illegal for a pedestrian to talk or text on a cell phone while crossing the street. Many communities have done this with positive results in seeing a reduction in accidents. Second, Mr. Freeman, has your office been in contact with the Bergen County traffic in the suggestion we made concerning the elimination of the merge points on Summit Avenue and Essex Street for northbound traffic, Polifly Road and Essex Street for northbound traffic where there are merges points on the north side of Essex Street with a reconfiguration of the traffic lanes available.

City Manager responded – I did not talk to the County yet. We are still talking internally. I do recognize your concern and agree. We will follow up on it.

Mr. Smith – The next thing I would like to bring up is something we brought up to the previous Council several years ago which was reducing the speed limit on Summit Avenue between Spring Valley and Passaic. In 2024, there was a survey done by the Bergen County Sheriff's Department for a week period in which they surveyed 88,000 vehicles traveling that section of Summit Avenue. The posted speed limit is 35 mph and the average speed of vehicles surveyed was 38 mph. That speed is too fast for a residential street. The intersections between Passaic and Spring Valley, of the nine intersections, seven of them have no crosswalks. All seven happen to be T intersections. The only two with crosswalks are through intersections at Anderson and one further north.

Gerald Francis Jr. – I am not complaining about anything. I have had the privilege because I do Uber around town, I always ask people I pick up who are not from here. We all know the city has swelled a lot, we have a lot of people from New York who moved over. Anytime they get in my car, I ask where are you from and they tell me and I ask what they think of Hackensack, how do you feel about Hackensack? I get the same answer all the time. It's quiet and it's safe. That makes me feel good. Even though the city is swelling, we had some incidents happen weeks ago, but I feel that can happen anywhere. Not throwing shade on that because it is serious, but people come into our city who not from here and they feel homey and welcomed, I think that is a good thing. Us that are from here, because I am born and raised here, I know several of us are from Hackensack, I feel like we need to share the love a little bit. I was one that complained about a lot of things around Hackensack, but I changed the tide within myself to actually welcome certain things like the downtown Main Street, maybe it is not the best downtown. Everyone has their own opinion, but I find it cool, nice, good eateries, small businesses and we should support it. You live here, let's get out there and get a good bite to eat. If you want to follow me on Hackensack Talks, follow me. I want to share with you the good side of things going on in Hackensack. There are a lot of good things happening and we need to acknowledge that and be grateful for that.

No one else wished to speak.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was offered by Clark Collins and seconded by Deputy Mayor Toomey.

Mayor Gaines – I have to apologize, I missed the City Manager's report. I was so excited by the budget that I missed it on the agenda.

City Managers Report: I have a couple things. This Saturday 10 at 10AM we have

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opening day of baseball and softball at Foschini Park. It is always a great day and the kids are looking forward to it. Please show support if you can. The rent stabilization board is in need of some members. If you go on the website, you will see the application on the website. There are different levels of membership needed but if you are interested, please submit an application. Lastly, I did want to acknowledge that Johnson Library received a 2026 historic preservation award from the County. It was quite an undertaking. They took hours and took all the newspapers from 1858 to 1938 such as the Hackensack Republican, the Bergen County Democrat, and the Bergen Index and they scanned them and digitized them all and they are all searchable and printable and preserved for generations. That was quite a task, and it was great of the County to recognize them. They do a great job at the library. Lastly, part of the commitment of this administration was to address resident parking concerns in the City and a quick update on that, we do have a new traffic enforcement officer that works midnights, the overnight shift. It has proven to be very productive as far as policing illegal parking in the overnight. That was a nice positive to hear.

Mayor Gaines – Before we go, I am going to ask for Captain Weber to come forward to address some of the traffic concerns that were raised.

Captain Ryan Weber – Good evening, Mayor and Council. Good evening Mr. Smith, I spoke with you on the phone before and you also spoke with Lt. Cappadonna. As far as Summit, we did get another study from the County, and it is under review. A new study was done in the beginning of April. We will get back to you with that. As far as the comments about talking to the County, I did speak to the County. I told them about the concerns about the merge on Summit, basically heading north on Summit just south of Essex Street, you were concerned about how one lane goes left and two lanes go straight and there is a merge on the other side of the road. They believe that should stay the way it is because there is such a backlog of traffic as it is with the two lanes going north that they think creating one lane going north would create more of a traffic jam, but they did say they will install a merge sign to let people know there is a merge up ahead. That is one thing they did say they will do. The one on Polifly, I told them I believe that left lane which is probably used the most, heading on Polifly north, south of Essex Street. That left lane going on to Essex, they are going to look into that because I believe that was a good suggestion. That left lane should be left turn only lane and one lane should be going north on First Street and then the right lane east to Essex Street. They were going to look into that further and they will get back to us. As far as the distracted walking concerns, we all know it is an issue that people look down at their cell phones and don't pay attention. I think us, as well as other police departments in Bergen County and in New Jersey, mainly feel like we want to target more of the distracted drivers because even if someone is looking at their phone and they are in the crosswalk, they still have the right of way over the cars. We do get a weekly traffic bulletin from the division of highway traffic safety and we put that out on our social media every week. Some of them do talk about distracted walking and pedestrians. We believe we want to take more of an education campaign for pedestrians and keep them aware about that concern of distracted walking. In May, I think that was part of the grant that passed, we got a grant for a pedestrian safety grant for May and June so we will be out there enforcing vehicles crossing through the pedestrian crosswalks, as well as jaywalking and pedestrian concerns. We are getting a grant to do that. I think that covers it.

VIII. MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Deputy Mayor Toomey – Good evening and thank you for coming. I would like to thank everyone for their presentations tonight and I would like to say, and I'd like to be clear, that we would like nothing more than to dwell on past or repeatedly point to prior administrations however there are things that come up like tonight's budget presentation by Mr. Mangin, and thank you for the extensive explanation on things, and I am still perplexed on some of the ways that our city was run by the prior administration. With that being said, we are in our first year and we are almost coming to full circle July 1st and we have come upon a bunch of steppingstones, some bigger than others. Our focus is on addressing the challenges that come in front of us as they arise. Hopefully, they will start getting less and less because like I said, we are coming full circle, and we have met up with everything that happens during the year including our first budget. This is our first budget, and I am not happy about it much, but we are managing as responsibly as we possibly can. We're trying to be as clear to everyone as we possibly can given the circumstances that we have inherited. We understand the concerns that have been raised. These concerns we share. We live here too. We own homes here too and we are directly impacted by the same tax burdens as every resident in this community, so we hear you and we are as frustrated as you are. Once again, we are committed to correcting these issues and ensuring stronger oversight moving forward. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we work through these challenging circumstances together. Thank you for coming out and have a good evening.

Councilwoman Clark-Collins – I want to invite you to the Recreation Board meeting that will be held on May 6 at 6PM. Please come out and invite your friends and we can have that discussion about the splash pad. Of course, if the majority feels that it should not be part of Baldwin Park then majority rules. I also wanted to say that I love geese, and I also believe in non-lethal ways, so you have my full support there. I wanted to address the comment of tell it like it is. I just wanted to say that it's really easy to come up and make comments and things don't always work as you think they do. It is not always black and white so to speak. There is a lot more involved in processes than you know. I'll give you an example. I have people a lot of times say to me there are still more buildings going up, I thought we were passed that. Why are there still more buildings being built? Well, things that were passed cannot just be undone for legal reasons because if you tried to do that than we would be in major lawsuits. My point is, is that you got to be patience. We hear you, we hear what you are saying, and we are trying our best to work on a lot of things to correct a lot of things that were previously done or not done. I would like to commend Gerald for coming out and saying something positive because it is nice to hear something positive every now and then other than complaints, complaints, and negativity. I have to tell you, in the years that the past administration was there, I did not see as many people as I see now. I was part of the Work Group, and we used to always come out and sit at these meetings and there was hardly anyone there. I am happy to see you. I am happy to see more and more people getting involved but remember be patient. Thank you.

Councilman Carroll – I will keep it short. Mr. Mangin, thank you for that report. Again, we can only make it better. You have to remember; there were PILOT programs before us. We came in and we immediately put a stop to them, a temporary hold I should say not stop because they had contracts and we had to go through them and make sure that we knew what they were about. We did do that. I don't think there is anything in front of us since we have been in as far as a building project. The next project is hopefully Baldwin Park. Thank you for coming out.

Councilman Diaz – Good evening and thank you all for being here tonight and engaged in this great discussion about the budget. Thank you, Mr. Mangin, for your presentation. If there is one thing I like about this budget, it's the fact that you were able to clarify to some of the audience and to all of us about why. Thank you again. We tackled some tough topics and though our perspectives on the how may defer, I know our hearts are all in the same place, working for the good of the community. We realize increases are difficult to hear but at times they are unavoidable. I want to reassure you that this Council is dedicated to doing the work required to get us where we need to be. We hear your concerns and we ask for your patience as the solutions take shape. Let's turn tonight's energy into progress. There is plenty of work to do but I truly believe that we are on the right path. Thank you for being here and have a good one.

Mayor Gaines – If you are one of those people like I used to be and just skipped a lot of the meeting and went to the Council comments to see what people have to say, I am going to encourage you to go back and watch the budget presentation. The key takeaway is this is a budget that is based on the 2025 spend and the takeaway I had

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is that facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored. That is a quote from Aldis Huxley, as I trust Mr. Cerbo knows as he is talking about literature and education quite often. I hope that you caught that one. You can't just turn a blind eye to issues and will them away. Facts are pesky things; they don't care so much about whether it's an election year. They don't care about how much money you spend on your campaign literature. They don't care about all those sorts of things because facts have a way, as someone I know likes to say, all knots eventually come to the comb. Now we are at the comb. The Deputy Mayor mentioned that she is frustrated. I will tell you what I am frustrated by. I am frustrated that in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 there were clear signs that we were trending in the wrong direction economically. I am frustrated that for all of those years, all that we heard was that everything was going great in the City of Hackensack and that as I watched rusted out garbage trucks and plows go down my street and I got quarterly mailers of luxury buildings that I can never go in, that we were told that the financial situation in the City of Hackensack was great. That is what I am frustrated by. I am not frustrated by this budget because we are being responsible in doing what should have been done. I am frustrated that we were sold a bag of goods for a long time and now we have this spike that is a thing that we should have been trying to avoid all along. When I say we, I don't mean the five of us. I mean we the City, the previous folks that were sitting here that like to condescend and school everyone about how we were all wrong to see what we were seeing when it is the reality now and was always the reality. That is what I am frustrated by. This budget, and I have full faith and confidence in the people that are sitting here, in our ability to ask questions of our professionals, of our employees to make sure that we do our diligence and that we are honest and that we communicate with you, as we have done since we have been sworn in, in good times and in bad times. We have sent out some messages to say we can do better and we have sent out some messages to say we think we are doing okay. Today I am going to say very clearly, they should have done better. They should have done better. Regarding seniors who would like to freeze their tax contributions, there is a program through the State – Stay NJ, I believe. You can go on the State website for senior freeze and you can freeze that. For anyone who is out there who is not a senior, who is thinking now my taxes are going to go up, the State covers the cost. The municipality still gets their taxes, the State covers it. If you are a senior and you are saying why am I paying taxes for this, then freeze if you haven't done so. That is not just for the folks who spoke, that is for everyone. I want to make that clear as well. Thank you to everyone for coming out. We appreciate your engagement. It is important. This is our City. We are five people up here for you, but there are 47,000 of us. Thank you for speaking.

IX. ADOURN:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Approved by Mayor and Council on May 5, 2026.

Mayor Caseen Gaines

Deputy Mayor Agatha Toomey

Councilwoman Sonya Clark-Collins

Councilman Phillip Carroll

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Councilman Roberto Diaz

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Deputy City Clerk Allison Saabye, RMC

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