



MINUTES

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Meeting Room
71 Main Street, Building 1, Second Floor
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

May 19, 2026

I. **5:00 p.m. CONVENE:**

II. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

1. Resolution Entering into Executive Session.

The Board entered executive session at 5:01 p.m. Commissioner Rich was absent during roll call and called into executive session.

Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Shaun Van Doren

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:** Zachary Rich

III. **5:30 p.m. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

IV. **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

V. **REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNSEL ON EXECUTIVE SESSION**

VI. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Van Doren, liaison to the Department of Human Services, announced that the Senior Expo will take place on Friday, May 29 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Senior Center in Raritan Township, featuring senior-focused vendors, informational panels on financial scams and legal issues, and an optional preregistered lunch. He added the County was also awarded an AARP Community Challenge Grant to construct a LINK bus shelter at the Human Services Complex. Commissioner Van Doren shared he recently attended the Raritan Valley Community College commencement ceremony, the Liberty Pole Raising Ceremony in Tewksbury Township as part of America 250 events, and presented proclamations to Eagle Scouts Jackson Celmer and Jason Snyder at their Court of Honor. In closing, he noted that County Administrator Brad Myhre will present an update on the Rural Health Transformation Grant on behalf of Health Department Director Karen DeMarco later in the meeting.

VII. **HUNTERDON COUNTY 9/11 MEMORIAL PRESENTATION, Sheriff Frederick Brown**
Hunterdon County Sheriff, Fred Brown, provided an update on the 25th-anniversary 9/11 memorial dedication, noting the importance of remembering the events of September 11 and educating younger generations. He announced a permanent memorial has been designated for the Hilltop Preserve on Thatcher's Hill Road, a site where smoke from the World Trade Center was visible for days after the attacks. The memorial design incorporates elements representing all three crash locations, including a pentagon-shaped patio, raised beds planted with native grasses from the Flight 93 site, a flagpole, a bronze plaque listing Hunterdon County victims, and two ginkgo trees symbolizing the World Trade Center towers, with the memorial oriented toward Ground Zero. Sheriff Brown announced this year's guest speaker will be Mark Desire of the NYC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, who will discuss advancements in remains identification. The public is encouraged to attend the dedication, reflecting on the unity Americans shared in the weeks following 9/11.

VIII. **RECAP OF THE 2026 TEEN ARTS FESTIVAL, Natalie Zaman, Cultural & Heritage Commission Executive Director**

Ms. Natalie Zaman, the Executive Director of the Cultural & Heritage Commission shared recap of the Teen Arts Festival was presented, noting it as the Cultural & Heritage Commission's first program celebrating America's 250th, featuring themed activities highlighting national and Hunterdon County history, including reenactments, racecar sketching tied to the Flemington Speedway, and a pysanka workshop connected to the County's egg industry. She shared that approximately 575 students attended with over 600 participating overall, and student-created graphics showcased throughout the event. Additional benefits included strengthened connections among local history organizations, promotion of related County initiatives, and expanded accessibility through virtual exhibits. In closing, Ms. Zaman expressed appreciation to partner organizations, volunteers, funders, County departments, and the Board of County Commissioners for their support in making the festival successful and impactful.

IX. **PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITION**

1. Recognizing Hunterdon County Vocational School District Students for Success at the FCCLA Spring State Leadership Conference Competition.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Zachary Rich

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

2. Celebrating the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting of Madison Rose Finery.

Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Zachary Rich

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

3. Recognizing Jackson Celmer, a dedicated member of Scouts Troop 65, upon achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Motion: To approve Proclamation #3 & #4

By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

2. Authorizing the 2026 County Budget to be read by title only.
Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Zachary Rich
Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

3. 2026 County Budget.
Motion: To open the public hearing
By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Susan Soloway
Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

There were no public comments.

Motion: To close the public hearing
By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Zachary Rich
Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

The public hearing closed.

4. Adoption of the 2026 County Budget.
Commissioner Van Doren, Commissioner Rich and Director Lanza provided brief comments and appreciation for the FY2026 County Budget and all those who helped prepare it.

Motion: By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Susan Soloway
Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

5. Approving a sum in the amount of \$9,453,008.80 as the Amount to be Raised in 2026 for Open Space, Recreation, Farmland and Historic Preservation.
Motion: By: Zachary Rich **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl
Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

6. Approving a sum in the amount of \$9,129,950.13 as the Amount to be Raised for the 2026 Operating Budget of the Hunterdon County Library.
Motion: By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Zachary Rich
Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

7. Introduction of Bond Ordinance 2026-02; Providing for Various 2026 Capital Improvements, by and in the County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, Appropriating \$8,760,000 therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$8,342,857 Bonds or Notes of the County to Finance Part of the Costs thereof.
Motion: By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Zachary Rich

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

14. Introduction of Capital Ordinance 2026-09; Providing Acquisition of Lands/Properties and/or Development Easements for Open Space and Farmland Preservation Projects, Various General Capital Improvements and Acquisition of Equipment by, in and for the County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey; and Appropriating \$4,560,000 from the Hunterdon County Open Space, Recreation, Farmland Preservation and Historic Trust Fund to pay for the cost thereof.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Susan Soloway

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XIII. PLANNING & LAND USE

1. Consenting to the Proposed Amendment to the Upper Raritan Water Quality Management Plan for the Fox Hollow at Readington Development.

Motion: By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Susan Soloway

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XIV. PURCHASING, Ray Rule, QPA

1. Approving a contract award for County Bid 2026-05, with BRT Technologies LLC, to furnish automated data processing services for the Board of Taxation, in an amount not to exceed \$653,876.00.

Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XV. APPOINTMENTS

1. Approving the appointment of Helen Lee Meyers to the Cultural & Heritage Commission for a five-year term effective May 19, 2026 through December 31, 2030.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Shaun Van Doren

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XVI. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl

Yes: John Lanza, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway, Shaun Van Doren

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

1. Approving the Claims Register dated May 19, 2026.
2. Approving the executive session and regular meeting minutes from the May 05, 2026 meeting.

16. Authorizing the Director or Deputy Director of the Board of County Commissioners to sign a Display Agreement with D&M Fireworks, LLC for the Hunterdon County 250th Firework Display on July 8, 2026 at Deer Path Park.
17. Authorizing Pattenburg Volunteer Fire Company to host a coin toss on May 23, 2026, at the intersection of Perryville Road (County Route 635) and Frontage Road and the intersection of Frontage Road and County Route 614.
18. Approving a request from Fairmount Fire Company to host a coin toss on Friday, May 29, 2026 at the intersection of County Route 512 and 517 in the Township of Tewksbury.
19. Authorizing the Director or Deputy Director to sign Change Order #1-FINAL, for the Resurfacing and Rehabilitation of County Route 635 in the Township of Bethlehem and Borough of Hampton, with an increase of \$188,926.04.
20. Accepting the project known as the Resurfacing and Rehabilitation of County Route 635 in the Township of Bethlehem and Borough of Hampton, County of Hunterdon in accordance with N.J.S.A. 2A:44-132, and authorizing the final payment in the amount of \$228,994.25 be made to Kyle Conti Construction LLC.
21. Authorizing the Director or Deputy Director of the Board of County Commissioners to sign Contract #27APKC, with the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Disability Services for the period July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, in the amount of \$20,592.00, State funding, for the purpose of administering the Personal Assistance Services Program.
22. Authorizing the Department of Human Services to apply for and accept the NJ-JARC Round 13 (SFY27) Grant Application from NJ Transit for \$200,000.00 for the period of July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.
23. Authorizing the Division of Senior, Disabilities and Veterans Services to submit an electronic State Health Insurance Program grant application for the anticipated award amount of \$34,000.00 for the term of April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027.
24. Authorizing the Department of Human Services to accept the AARP Community Challenge Grant in the amount of \$12,490.00, for the purpose of installing a Bus Shelter at the Gauntt Place Complex LINK Stop to provide protection and convenience for public transportation passengers.
25. Approving an Interlocal Agreement for Class III Special Law Enforcement Officer (SLEO) with East Amwell Township Board of Education.
26. Approving an Interlocal Agreement for Class III Special Law Enforcement Officer (SLEO) with Delaware Valley Regional High School District Board of Education.

history and identifying historical patterns related to censorship, authoritarianism, and discrimination, explaining concerns regarding rhetoric surrounding immigration and elections. She referenced Robert Paxton's work on fascism and arguments were presented connecting statements attributed to Assemblyman Peterson with historical warning signs associated with political movements based on fear, grievance, and exclusion. Cathy identified herself as both an immigrant and Democrat, expressing concerns regarding rhetoric directed toward immigrants, and concluded by stating a belief that historical lessons require speaking out against perceived dangers rather than remaining silent.

XVIII. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Director Lanza addressed repeated public comments regarding remarks made by Assemblyman Peterson, noting that the issue had been raised over multiple meetings despite the Assemblyman not serving on the Board for many years. Director Lanza stated that contact information for Assemblyman Peterson's office had previously been provided and expressed the view that concerns should be directed to the individual who made the statements rather than repeatedly raised before the Board. Director Lanza stated that the Board's focus remains on conducting County business and expressed the belief that repeated discussion of comments made by individuals outside the Board was creating controversy unrelated to Board actions or positions. Remarks characterized the repeated public comments as performative and intended to generate attention rather than resolve concerns.

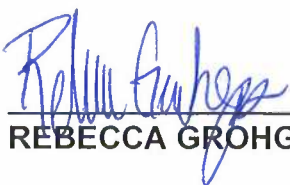
Director Lanza also addressed claims related to election integrity, stating personal support for Jack Ciattarelli during prior campaigns and noting that neither Director Lanza nor Mr. Ciattarelli had publicly claimed elections were stolen. Director Lanza rejected the suggestion that statements made by others should be attributed to members of the Board because of shared political affiliation. Director Lanza concluded by stating that the Board had allowed repeated public comment on the topic over several meetings but maintained the position that continued discussion of remarks made by non-Board members was not productive and detracted from County business.

XIX. EXECUTIVE SESSION (Reconvene if necessary)

XX. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 6:38 p.m. on a motion by Commissioner Soloway, seconded by Commissioner Rich, followed by a voice carry.

Respectfully submitted and transcribed by:



REBECCA GROHGANS, CLERK