

REGULAR MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
JULY 14, 2025

Mayor Chegwidden called the Meeting to Order.

Mayor Chegwidden read the Open Public Meeting Statement.

Roll Call

Mayor Chegwidden requested Roll Call:

Council President Norton - Present
Councilman Binkoski - Present
Councilwoman Jones - Present
Councilwoman Vasquez - Present
Councilwoman Wickenheisser - Present
Councilman Yeager - Present

Flag Salute

Mayor Chegwidden led those present in the Salute to the American Flag.

Minute of Silence

Mayor Chegwidden led those present in a minute of silence for Charlotte Kelly.

Open to the Public

In accordance with Local Ordinance O-18-03, "Persons making public comment at the first public portion shall be limited to five (5) minutes. During the second public portion the presiding officer shall have the discretion to terminate any repetitive, irrelevant or excessive public comment in the interest of permitting all members of the public time to speak on any governmental issue and completing the public business within a reasonable period of time."

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public.

Matthew Vedder, 1066 Treetops: He asked if the DOT would be keeping the new traffic light pattern at the intersection of Rt. 15 and E. Dewey Ave. Chief Young indicated the lights were changed soon after Route 80 opened up due to traffic pattern changes since the sinkhole. They are monitoring it and will make recommendations to the County if it becomes a problem. Mayor Chegwidden advised that would eventually change, as COSTCO is putting another turn lane exiting their parking lot. Chief Young asked that residents let them know if they see a problem.

Mark Baldwin, 39 Columbia St.: He indicated he is very happy with the new traffic light pattern. He also had several questions relating to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Chief Young explained there is no communication or coordination with Federal authorities and the police are prohibited from working with them on anything other than criminal matters. He advised the public to notify the police if they see something they are concerned about so they can look into it.

Jennifer Hobbs, 40 Fern Ave.: She indicated one of her neighbors owns a rooster that crows at all hours of the day and wanted town Ordinance information about owning roosters. She was advised to contact the Zoning Official for more information.

Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

Ordinance

Councilman Yeager presented O-10-25, “An Ordinance Adding Chapter 315, Article IV, Section 34 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey” on second reading, by title only.

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on this Ordinance only.

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser to adopt O-10-25 on second and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 0	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Ordinance

Councilman Yeager presented O-11-25, “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 315, Article II, Section 8 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey” on second reading, by title only.

Mayor Chegwidden opened the meeting to the public for questions or comments on this Ordinance only.

No one wishing to be heard, Mayor Chegwidden closed the meeting to the public.

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to adopt O-11-25 on second and final reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 0	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Ordinance

Councilman Binkoski introduced O-12-25, “An Amending Ordinance to Provide for Water Capital Projects Enumerated within for the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris and to Provide for the Funding Thereof,” on first reading, by title only.

A motion was made by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilwoman Jones to adopt O-12-25 on first reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 0	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Mayor Chegwidden set the date of August 18, 2025 for second and final reading.

Ordinance

Councilwoman Vasquez introduced O-13-25, “An Amending Ordinance to Provide for Water Capital Projects Enumerated within for the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris and to Provide for the Funding Thereof,” on first reading, by title only.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Vasquez and was seconded by Councilman Yeager to adopt O-13-25 on first reading.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6	NAY: 0	ABSENT: 0	ABSTAIN: 0
MOTION CARRIED			

Mayor Chegwidden set the date of August 18, 2025 for second and final reading.

Discussion

- Proposed new Ordinance - Mr. Kovalcik clarified that this is not a new ordinance, but rather a fee structure that will be added to Ordinance 231, specifically for storefronts and vacant properties.

The Council agreed to review the language for both the regulations and the proposed fee structure and discuss further at another meeting.

Consent Agenda

The following items are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Mayor and Council and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member or citizen so requests, in which case, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in a normal sequence on the agenda.

Approval of Bills: Approve all bills referred to the Finance Committee

R-104-25: Approving Extinguishment of Easement and Receipt of New Easement
R-109-25: Renew Liquor Licenses
R-110-25: Amend R-47-25
R-111-25: Approve Grant Submittal/Contract NJDOT 2026 West Central Ave. & Pine St.
R-112-25: Approve Grant Submittal/Contract NJDOT 2026 Elizabeth St. & Sunset Dr.
R-113-25: Increase Bid Threshold
R-114-25: Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation- Municipal Alliance
R-115-25: Requesting Approval of Items of Revenue and Appropriation- Municipal Alliance Supplemental
R-116-25: Prof. Services- CHA Baker Ave. Phase 3 and 4

Approve Fire Department Application Roy Williams, III

A motion was made by Council President Norton and was seconded by Councilman Binkoski to approve all items listed on the Consent Agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEA: 6 NAY: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence

- Morris County Planning Board Minutes
- Notice of Ordinance Roxbury Township

Council Reports

Council President Norton: The Wharton Anniversary festival had a fantastic turnout.

Councilman Binkoski: He reported we've reached an agreement with the Teamsters. He thanked Mr. Kovalcik and Mr. Hutchins for coming up with a plan that helped them to get to a place to be comfortable with our offer. He attended the last concert at the park and the concerts are a lot of fun.

Councilwoman Jones: She advised Ms. Hobbs per the town Ordinance, roosters are not allowed. She attended the Library Board meeting and the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting. She also attended the summer concert and Wharton Night Out which, both were amazing and well attended.

Councilwoman Vasquez: She attended the summer concert and the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting. She is also working with the Zoning Official on a few small issues.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She attended the summer concert and the Wharton Anniversary event and thanked the Police Department for a great job. She also Attended the Somerset Patriots game with the Wharton Area Little League which was well attended.

Councilman Yeager: He attended the Wharton Anniversary event and had a great time. He reported the Police Department had 333 motor vehicle stops and 1,575 incidents.

Mayor Chegwidde's Report:

- He and Councilwoman Vasquez attended the Planning Board meeting with the Housing element. No one from the public attended. He reported that the town is well-positioned regarding affordable housing and expressed gratitude to Jessica Caldwell and the Planning Board for their efforts.
- He attended the Executive Board meeting for the New Jersey League of Municipalities and the Morris County League of Municipalities meeting. Discussions at the latter included empty buildings in Morris County and the State's interest in converting them into affordable housing.
- He enjoyed the baseball game at Robert Street Park and congratulated the Minors1 - Team Invictus on their Northern Morris Inter-League Championship win and their undefeated 12-0 season.
- He attended the Jersey First meeting, which also focused on affordable housing.
- He met with Mr. Kovalcik, Scott Hutchins and the contractor at Orchard Fields Park. The project is ready to move forward.
- He attended the summer concert which was very enjoyable.
- He was at the grand opening of Tropical Smoothie and commend them on their success.
- The Wharton Anniversary event was a great success. He extended his thanks to Chief Young, the Municipal Alliance, and the DPW for their contributions.
- He attended the RVRSA meeting.
- He attended the Picatinny Charge meeting with Senator Bucco. Picatinny has identified several shared services opportunities they are interested in pursuing with Wharton.
- Work at the intersection of Route 15 and E. Dewey Ave. will commence soon, and the new ramp is expected to significantly improve traffic flow.
- Progress is being made on the Pine Street parking project.
- The grass is growing well at 262 W. Dewey Ave., and we anticipate installing picnic tables there shortly.
- Baker Ave. Phase I is scheduled to begin on July 28th.
- Grant applications have been submitted for the preservation of the Rock Wall and Cart Path at the canal, lead pipe remediation, and dredging at Washington Pond.

Open to the Public

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Mayor Chegwiddden opened the meeting to the public.

Scott Hutchins, DPW Director: Mr. Hutchins reported the ground breaking ceremony at the Fields at Orchard Mines would be held on Friday, July 18th.

Jennifer Hobbs, 40 Fern Ave.: She inquired about the next steps concerning a rooster in her neighborhood and was advised to speak with our Zoning Official for guidance on this matter. She also asked whether the "Big Beautiful Bill" had resulted in a reduction of local funding. It was explained that, to date, this has not been the case, but it could potentially affect future grant opportunities.

Mark Baldwin, 39 Columbia St.: He asked about the status of the Columbia Street Park grant. Mr. Kovalcik informed him that the funding has been delayed until 2026 due to the timing of the budget bill. As a result, we are currently postponing the project until the grant funds are received. He also indicated we have a contingency plan in place and have already earmarked funds for this project in next year's budget.

He also asked if Lowe Street would be paved this year. Mr. Hutchins confirmed that Lowe Street will not be paved this year, as the project was delayed to accommodate a resident's sewer project.

Stacy Gasser, 68 Baker Ave.: She advised there is a standing water issue at Columbia Street Park that is causing a mosquito health hazard. Mr. Hutchins advised that we will investigate potential solutions to address this issue.

Matthew Vedder, 1066 Treetops: He inquired about repairs to Main Street, specifically the section where the detour was established and was informed that we have requested the County to include these repairs in their budget for next year.

Mayor Chegwiddden closed the meeting to the public.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn by Councilman Binkoski and was seconded by Councilwoman Wickenheisser.

July 14, 2025

BOROUGH OF WHARTON

ATTEST:

WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,
MAYOR

Cheryl Muzzillo,
Deputy Borough Clerk