

REGULAR MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
DECEMBER 8, 2025

Mayor Chegwiddden called the Meeting to Order.

Mayor Chegwiddden read the Open Public Meeting Statement.

Roll Call

Mayor Chegwiddden requested Roll Call:

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

Also in attendance were Administrator David Young, Deputy Borough Clerk Cheryl Muzzillo and Attorney Roman Hirniak.

Flag Salute

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

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 Chegwiddden opened the meeting to the public

Mark Baldwin 39 Columbia St.: He thanked Mr. Norton for his service to the town and wished him well. He inquired about the steps being taken regarding the transition process for the incoming Council members. In response, it was noted that the new members will have the opportunity to attend the NJ League of Municipalities seminar for newly elected officials. Furthermore, the incoming members have been encouraged to contact the Mayor or current Council members directly with any questions they may have.

Jennifer Hobbs, 40 Fern Ave.: She indicated she was expecting someone to contact her regarding next steps. Councilman Binkoski stated that he had advised Ms. Hobbs after the last meeting to contact him if she had any questions, but also clarified that she will not be eligible to receive some information until after she has been officially sworn in at the Reorganizational meeting on January 8th. He again invited her to reach out to any of the current council members if she had questions.

Miriam Onembo, 204 W. Dewey Ave.: She expressed concern about the legality of Ordinance #20-25 and questioned why it was being introduced without allowing more time for public review. It was explained that this was the first reading of the Ordinance, and the public would have until the December 29th meeting to review it. The public will then have an opportunity to offer questions or comments before the vote at that meeting.

Additionally, Ms. Onembo praised the town's efforts regarding fiscal responsibility.

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

Presentation

The Wharton Area Little League’s Team Invictus was recognized for their undefeated season and Championship win and were presented with baseballs from the Mayor and Council.

Ordinance

Councilwoman Wickenheisser presented O-18-25, “An Ordinance of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey Authorizing the Acquisition by Purchase or Eminent Domain of Certain Property Identified as Block 1606, Lot 3 on the Official Tax Map of the Borough of Wharton and Located at Known as 52 South Main Street,” on second reading, by title only.

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

Mark Baldwin, 39 Columbia St.: Mr. Baldwin inquired about the property's price. It was explained that we can only pay the amount for which the property is appraised. When he asked for the appraisal figure, it was estimated the value is approximately \$950,000.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wickenheisser and seconded by Councilman Yeager to adopt O-18-25 on second and final reading.

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

Ordinance

Councilman Yeager introduced O-19-25, “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 330, Section 20 H1 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey” on first reading, by title only.

A motion was made by Councilman Yeager and seconded by Councilwoman Vasquez to adopt O-19-25 on first reading.

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

Mayor Chegwidden set the date of December 29, 2025 for second and final reading.

Ordinance

Councilwoman Vasquez introduced O-20-25, “An Ordinance Amending Chapter 165, Article XV, Section 103 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Wharton, County of Morris, State of New Jersey” on first reading, by title only.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Vasquez and seconded by Councilman Yeager to adopt O-20-25 on first reading.

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

Mayor Chegwidden set the date of December 29, 2025 for second and final reading.

Resolution

Councilwoman Wickenheisser introduced R-163-25, “Resolution Authorizing 2026 Community Development Block Grant Application.”

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

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Wickenheisser and seconded by Councilman Yeager to adopt R-163-25.

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

Discussion

- Meeting Dates – Discussion occurred regarding changing the Re-organization Meeting date from Monday, January 5, 2026 to Thursday, January 8, 2026. The change was approved via voice vote.

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-164-25: Wharton LE Carpenter Resolution Consenting to Transfer of Redevelopment Agreement and Financial Agreement

R-165-25: Refund for Street Opening Escrow

R-166-25: Payout Resolution- Nunn

R-167-25: Appoint Business Administrator

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

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

Correspondence

- Wharton Mall v. Wharton Tax Appeal Settlement Memo
- Jefferson Township – Notice of Adoption of Ordinance
- Roxbury Township – Notices of Adoption of Ordinances

Council Reports

Council President Norton: No Report

Councilman Binkoski: No report

Councilwoman Jones: Attended NJLM Annual Conference for first time. It was very informative.

Councilwoman Vasquez: She attended the NJLM Annual Conference She highly recommended these informative classes to the new council members.

She extended her thanks to the Fire Department for their efforts in handling the recent fire at Pop’s Bagels.

An update was provided on the ordinance regarding storefront vacancy and an associated fee schedule. Mr. Young clarified that the entire ordinance is being reworked to improve clarity and address issues with language and definitions.

Councilwoman Wickenheisser: She attended the Fire Department Inspection Dinner. She thanked the department for their quick response to the fire at Pop’s Bagels, as well as all of their hard work this year.

Additionally, she attended the NJLM Conference and participated in several informative educational classes.

She wished everyone a happy holiday.

Councilman Yeager: He attended the NJLM Annual Conference, the Police Department graduation, and the Fire Department Inspection dinner.

Mayor Chegwidden's Report:

- He congratulated Kevin Finnegan on 50 years of service with the Fire Department. He also recognized Bob O'Malley's many years of service to the department before his passing. He praised Doug Ploth and the entire Fire Department for their dedication and handling of town and mutual aid calls.
- He attended the RVRSA infrastructure meeting.
- He attended the NJLM conference, where he participated in discussions on taxation, accessory dwellings, and anticipated building legislation.
- He met with the coalition from Picatinny Arsenal and policymakers at the Pentagon.
- He requested continued support for Pop's Bagels at their location in Landing.
- He noted that due to NJ instituting drought restrictions, the town will be looking into water conservation measures.
- He concluded by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

Open to the Public

In accordance with Local Ordinance O-18-03, "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.

Scott Hutchins, 2 Columbia St.: Mr. Hutchins explained that his own successful transition to a Council member involved coming in with an open mind and working hard. He noted that the process is fundamentally the same now as it was when he joined, and it is the standard procedure for all new Council members. He also mentioned that he had attended Council meetings for four years before sitting on the Council, giving him a clear understanding of how the process worked.

He concluded by wishing the new members good luck.

Marisa Gonzalez, 8 Potter Ln.: She stated that she is there for the people of the town and is doing her due diligence before starting her term.

Jim Gottshall, 44 Third St.: He felt that the questioning at the beginning of the meeting was quite aggressive. He noted the importance of speakers conducting themselves appropriately at all times, particularly as children were present and observing the proceedings this evening.

Regarding Ordinance #20-25, he suggested that the language could be amended to address all temporary lawn signs generally, rather than focusing specifically on political signs.

Ms. Reynolds, 40 Fern Ave.: She expressed concern that if the Ordinance is amended to address all temporary signs, it may negatively impact residents' ability to display signs recognizing their children, such as those for wrestlers, cheerleaders, and other school activities.

Mark Baldwin, 39 Columbia St.: He requested that the meeting minutes be posted in a timelier manner moving forward.

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

Adjournment

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

December 08, 2025

BOROUGH OF WHARTON

ATTEST:

WILLIAM J. CHEGWIDDEN,
MAYOR

Cheryl Muzzillo,
Deputy Borough Clerk