MINUTES CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP

NEW JERSEY

THIS IS A CONFERENCE MEETING OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP HELD AT CITY HALL, 29 NORTH DAY STREET, ORANGE, NEW JERSEY ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2026 AT 7:01PM.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmember Kerry J. Coley, East Ward
Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert, West Ward *(Arrived at 7:09pm)*
Council Vice President Weldon M. Montague, III, At-Large
Councilmember Lynn A. Ogbourne, North Ward *(Arrived at 7:22pm)*
Councilmember James H. Ward, III, South Ward
Councilmember Adrienne K. Wooten, At-Large *(Arrived at 7:25pm)*
Council President Clifford R. Ross, At-Large

Also Present: Trisha A. Scipio, Acting Municipal Clerk
Chris M. Hartwyk, Business Administrator
Derrick Brown, Fire Chief
Nile Clements, Chief Financial Officer
Gracia R. Montilus, Esq., City Attorney
Marlin G. Townes. Esq., Legislative Research Officer

The Acting Municipal Clerk announced the recognition of a moment of Silence.

The Acting Municipal Clerk announced a "SPECIAL NOTICE: Please be apprised anyone wishing to discuss Agenda or General Items shall sign their name on the sign in sheet and will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to interact with the Council.

The Acting Municipal Clerk announced that the requirements of **N.J.S.A. 10:4-9 et seq.**, commonly known as the **Open Public Meetings Act ("Sunshine Law")**, have been satisfied. Notice of this meeting was published in the *Star-Ledger* on **Friday, July 10, 2026**, and on the City's official website (**www.orangenj.gov**). Notice was also posted on the Municipal Council's website (**www.orangetwpnjcc.org**), posted on the official bulletin board at City Hall, and filed in the Office of the Municipal Clerk.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Chris Vadas, Managing Member & Co-Owner of Greater Essex Counseling Services - a nonprofit providing family-oriented substance use treatment, mental health services, and wrap-around supports.

Mr. Vados addressed the Municipal Council to provide an overview of the organization's work in the City of Orange Township and its use of opioid settlement funding approved through Council resolutions over the past three years. He explained that Greater Essex Counseling Services operates outpatient mental health and substance use treatment facilities in Newark and Union City and collaborates with the City's Health Department and Police Department to connect residents with treatment, recovery resources, and other supportive services. He emphasized the importance of transparency and ensuring that opioid settlement funds are used appropriately to assist individuals affected by opioid addiction and substance use disorders.

Mr. Vados reported that, for the past three years, Greater Essex Counseling Services has conducted weekly community outreach on Wednesdays, spending approximately three to four hours in identified high-need areas throughout Orange in collaboration with the Orange Police Department. Outreach locations include the Orange Public Library, Monte Irvin Orange Park, Orange Park, Day Street, and North Center Street. During these outreach efforts, staff engage residents, distribute Narcan kits, provide information regarding substance use and available treatment services, and connect individuals with community resources. He reported that the organization distributed 422 Narcan kits, submitted 115 community resource referrals, referred nine individuals to treatment, and had five individuals graduate from its intensive outpatient program. He further explained that the organization's peer recovery team responds when the Police Department identifies individuals experiencing homelessness or requiring assistance, meeting them where they are and connecting them with resources and treatment when appropriate.

Mr. Vados also discussed the organization's mental health education and overdose prevention initiatives. Greater Essex Counseling Services conducted six mental health workshops, consisting of three Spanish-language workshops and three English-language workshops, with a total of 29 participants. The organization also conducted Narcan training at the Orange Public Library, which attracted more than 45 residents and representatives of local organizations and businesses. He noted that the training increased awareness of Narcan and its use in responding to opioid overdoses.

In addition to outreach and educational programming, Mr. Vados reported that opioid settlement funds support dental services for senior residents. The organization transports seniors from 340 Thomas Boulevard to its dental facility in Newark to receive services that may not be fully covered by their insurance, including dentures, extractions, and fillings. He reported that 48 seniors had received new dentures through the program. In response to questions from Councilmembers, he explained that dental services begin with X-rays to identify individual needs and may include extractions, fillings, dentures, and cleanings. He clarified that cleanings are provided, although they are generally covered by insurance, while the opioid settlement funds assist with services that are not covered.

Mr. Vados further highlighted community programs funded directly by Greater Essex Counseling Services outside the City's opioid settlement funding. He reported that the organization independently funded a community baby shower held on May 9, during which 160 Narcan kits, 100 meals, and 45 service connections were provided, along with rescue-breathing and Narcan-use training. He also described a June 24 community action event at which the organization distributed 500 meals, provided 35 free haircuts, distributed 35 Narcan kits, and conducted 15 blood pressure screenings. Additionally, the organization provides substance use education and prevention services at Orange High School. Students who test positive for substance use are referred to a substance use counselor for individual counseling sessions.

Mr. Vados stated that Greater Essex Counseling Services employs 32 individuals, four of whom reside in Orange. Although the organization is not based in the City, he reaffirmed its commitment to serving Orange residents and expressed appreciation for the Council's support and the collaboration with the Orange Health Department and Orange Police Department. He also discussed the organization's ongoing efforts to establish a location in Orange, including exploring the possibility of opening a homeless shelter that would offer not only temporary shelter but also substance use treatment, employment assistance, identification assistance, food resources, and other supportive services. He indicated that he had met with the Business Administrator on several occasions to explore potential properties and invited Councilmembers to visit the organization's facilities and collaborate on identifying a suitable location.

A Councilmember asked whether the organization provided outpatient or residential treatment services. Mr. Vados confirmed that Greater Essex Counseling Services operates an outpatient treatment facility. He explained that clients access the program through self-referrals as well as referrals associated with recovery court, parole, and other mandated treatment requirements.

A Councilmember also asked whether transportation was available to Orange residents seeking treatment in Newark and how residents could access that service. Mr. Vados confirmed that transportation is provided at no cost to eligible clients who need assistance getting to their intake appointments. He explained that, during the intake scheduling process, staff ask clients whether transportation is needed and, when requested, arrange for a driver to pick them up and transport them to the facility. A Councilmember shared a concern regarding an Orange resident who reportedly had been denied transportation after being referred to the program. Mr. Vados stated that this was not the organization's usual practice and committed to looking into the matter.

Regarding reporting and contract funding, a Councilmember asked how frequently the organization provides the City with data concerning the number of residents served and whether that information informed the increase in funding. Mr. Vados explained that, upon completion of the services, the organization compiles its data and submits it to the Orange Health Department. He clarified that the contract increase from $50,000 to $52,500 was attributable to an additional $2,500 for transportation. He explained that the City had initially provided transportation under the original resolution but subsequently discontinued that service, requiring Greater Essex Counseling Services to arrange transportation for seniors receiving dental services and other clients accessing the organization's programs.

Mr. Vados concluded by thanking the Council for its continued support and recognizing the contributions of the Business Administrator, the Orange Health Department, and the Orange Police Department. He reiterated the organization's commitment to providing substance use treatment, prevention education, recovery support, and other community services to Orange residents.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

492-2026A A resolution to hold an Executive (Closed) Session to discuss a matter falling within the Attorney/Client Privilege to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his/her ethical duties to this body.

A motion to adopt Resolution 492-2026A on was made by Council Vice President Weldon M. Montague, III and seconded by Councilmember Kerry J. Coley.

Roll Call:

Yeas: Hon. Kerry J. Coley, Hon. Quantavia L. Hilbert, Hon. Weldon M. Montague, III, Hon. Lynn A. Ogbourne, Hon. James H. Ward, III, Hon. Adrienne K. Wooten and Hon. Clifford R. Ross

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion Adopted

Entered Executive Closed Session at 7:16pm

A motion to close Executive Closed Session was made by Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert and seconded by Council Vice President Weldon M. Montague, III.

Roll Call:

Yeas: Hon. Kerry J. Coley, Hon. Quantavia L. Hilbert, Hon. Weldon M. Montague, III, Hon. Lynn A. Ogbourne, Hon. James H. Ward, III, Hon. Adrienne K. Wooten and Hon. Clifford R. Ross

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion Adopted

Entered Open Session at 8:00pm
Open Session resumed at 8:03pm

LEGISLATION

The Acting Municipal Clerk announced the resolutions and ordinances to be presented at tonight's meeting are listed on the attached Regular Meeting Agenda. If any Council Member wishes to discuss any resolution or ordinance, it may be discussed at this time.

During the discussion of resolutions and ordinances listed on the agenda, Council members reviewed several items, asked questions of the Administration, and requested clarification regarding the scope, funding, and terms of proposed legislation. Discussion included a proposed traffic study and the need to clarify that the developer would pay for the study while the City would select the independent vendor; the Scotland Road Gateway Beautification Project and the inclusion of language confirming full reimbursement; vehicle maintenance and repair bids; the acquisition of a vacant property; lead service line replacement and resident notification; and various redevelopment, grant funding, and community service initiatives.

Council members also discussed the proposed PILOT agreement, including the negotiated rate, the length of the agreement, and the long-term financial implications for the City and its residents. Additional questions were raised regarding the proposed development near Orange Memorial Hospital and Lincoln Avenue School, including traffic congestion, the need for a comprehensive traffic study, potential impacts on school enrollment, and affordability provisions. Other items discussed included opioid awareness services, the proposed Emergency Operations Center, improvements to the Central Avenue playground tennis courts, the administrative assignment of the Historic Preservation Commission, and measures to address vacant and abandoned properties.

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

39-2026 An ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Orange Township, Chapter 200, entitled "Vehicles and Traffic", Section 200-52-1, Handicapped Parking Spaces (54 North Essex Avenue).

The recommendation is to postpone to November 4, 2026

42-2026 An ordinance of the Municipal Council of the City of Orange Township, Essex County, New Jersey, amending Chapter 210 of the City of Orange Township Municipal Code, entitled "Development Regulations", to require traffic studies in connection with certain site plan approval applications submitted to the Planning Board or Zoning Board of adjustment, as applicable. (Sponsored by Council Member James H. Ward, III)

The City Attorney will add the amendment for the record – The City will nnot pay for the traffic study and choose the vendor.

ORDINANCES – INTRODUCTION | FIRST READING

47-2026 An ordinance of the Municipal Council of the City of Orange Township, Essex County, New Jersey, amending and supplementing Chapter 156 (Property Maintenance) of the City of Orange Township Municipal Code to update and expand the City's oversight of vacant and abandoned residential and commercial properties.
(Sponsored by Council President Clifford R. Ross)

Councilmember Quantavia L. Hilbert asked for an explanation.

ORDINANCES – INTRODUCTION | FIRST READING continued

56-2026 An ordinance of the City of Orange Township, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, amending and supplementing Chapters 88 and 200, of the code of the City of Orange Township to update permit parking fees and requirements and to establish a residential on-street overnight parking permit program.

57-2026 An ordinance amending Chapter 200 of the Code of the City of Orange Township to establish municipal parking garage rates, commuter parking fees, and parking permit fees for the Highland Avenue Municipal Lot.

58-2026 An ordinance amending Chapter 142 "Parking Lots" and Chapter 88 "Fees" of the Code of the City of Orange Township to establish an Overnight Municipal Parking Permit for City residents in designated municipal parking plazas.

Ordinances 56-2026, 57-2026, and 58-2026 will be postponed to November 4, 2026 meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

***497-2026 A resolution authorizing approval to amend the CY 2026 Municipal Budget by inserting items of revenue and appropriations totaling $137,000.00 in additional grant funding.**

Amended

RESOLUTIONS Removed for separate vote

***500-2026 A resolution authorizing an award of contract to Clear View Counseling LLC/Crown Work, Inc., 203 Oakwood Avenue, Orange, New Jersey 07050 in the amount of $123,000.00 to provide evidence based Opioid Prevention services in the City of Orange Township for the period of October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027.**

Contract was not attached

***504-2026 Resolution approving and authorizing the execution of a Community Benefits Agreement with Rakhee Enterprise Urban Renewal, LLC for the redevelopment of the property located at 339, 345, 351 and 355 Henry Street and identified on the official tax map of the City of Orange Township as Block 3704, Lots 33, 34, 35 and 36.**

***505-2026 Resolution designating Rakhee Enterprise Urban Renewal LLC as the redeveloper for the property located at 339, 345, 351 and 355 Henry Street and identified on the official tax map of the City of Orange Township as Block 3704, Lots 33, 34, 35 and 36 and authorizing the execution of a Redevelopment Agreement with Rakhee Enterprise Urban Renewal LLC for the redevelopment of this property.**

***509-2026 A resolution of the Municipal Council of the City of Orange Township, Essex County, New Jerse rescinding Resolution No. 381-2026 entitled "A resolution authorizing the award of an non-fair and open contract with Greater Essex Counseling Services to provide your-focused Opioid Prevention to City of Orange Township youth residents from September 14, 2026 through June 25, 2027 in amount not to exceed $30,000.00" adopted on August 5, 2026.**

***510-2026 A resolution of the Municipal Council of the City of Orange Township, Essex County, New Jersey authorizing the award of a non-fair and open contract with Greater Essex Counseling**

Services LLC to provide youth -focused Opioid prevention to City of Orange Township youth residents from September 2, 2026 through June 18, 2027 in an amount not to exceed $90,000.00.

***515-2026 A resolution of the Municipal Council of the City of Orange Township, Essex County, New Jersey, authorizing the award of RFP 2026-)EM-EOC-01 to Netta Architects LLC for professional services relating to construction of the emergency operations center project, in an amount not to exceed $160,000.**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Adrienne K. Wooten and seconded by Council Vice President Weldon M. Montague, III.
Motion Adopted

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52pm.

Approved: November 4, 2026

Trisha A. Scipio
Acting Municipal Clerk

Clifford R. Ross
Council President