

**The Public Meeting of the Mount Olive Township Council was called to order at 7:00pm by Vice President Roman.**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE for those who have lost their lives defending the freedom we all enjoy**

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Vice President Roman:** In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by sending timely notice to the Daily Record and the Mount Olive Chronicle and posting notice on the bulletin board of the Municipal Building, 204 Flanders Drakestown Road, Budd Lake, N.J. Additional notice has been posted on the Township website and Facebook page and on the outside front door of the Municipal Building and sent to those individuals requesting same.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Mr. Aaron, Mr. Ferrante, Mrs. Labow, Mrs. Lalama, Mr. Mania, Mr. Stewart, and Mr. Roman

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Susan Gouveia, Deputy Township Clerk; Jon Testa, Township Attorney; Joe Nicaastro, Mayor; Andrew Tatarenko, Business Administrator; Claudia Quinn, Assistant Business Administrator; and Sherry Kolody, CFO

**Vice President Roman** announces the first order of business is the swearing in of the new Mayor and Councilmembers. All take their oaths.

**SWEARING IN OF:**

Mayor

Joe Nicaastro

Councilpersons

Charles S. Aaron Jr.

Colleen Labow

Mary Lalama

Alex Roman

**ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT 2024**

**Mr. Mania** nominates Alex Roman for Council President and **Mr. Stewart** seconds.

**ROLL CALL:** Passed with the exception of Mrs. Labow, who voted NO

**ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT 2024**

**Mr. Stewart** nominates John Ferrante for Council Vice President and **Mrs. Labow** seconds.

**ROLL CALL:** Passed unanimously

**INVOCATION - Rabbi Yaacov Schusterman**

**MAYOR'S STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP ADDRESS**

Council President, members of the Town Council, municipal employees, friends, relatives, and fellow residents of Mount Olive,

As I address you for the first time as the Mayor of Mount Olive, I extend my gratitude for the opportunity to present the 2024 State of the Township of Mount Olive.

Congratulations to Council President Alex Roman and Vice President John Ferrante on assuming their new roles, and welcome to our newest Councilwoman, Mary Lalama, who now sits alongside the rest of our esteemed Council.

Having served on the Council for 12 years, I take pride in having witnessed and contributed to the positive transformations that have shaped Mount Olive into the outstanding community it is today.

The State of our Township is robust, thanks to the dedication and focus of our Business Administrator, department heads, and employees who consistently prioritize the well-being of our residents. A comprehensive report of all departments, statistics, and accomplishments can be found on the Township website.

As Mayor, I have a series of projects I aim to pursue:

- Institute a Property Tax Reward Program to benefit residents, renters, workers, and local Mount Olive businesses. Participating in this program means a portion of sales from local businesses will directly come off of the residents property taxes, and renters or workers will receive a check for the amount saved for participating businesses.
- Establish a permanent Mount Olive food pantry by raising funds through donations and grants, with a focus on assisting families in need.
- Ensure that all residents, whether homeowners or renters, have a voice by creating an informal board comprising a council member, renters, and a property manager (or owner). This board will convene quarterly to address emerging issues and provide assistance if necessary.
- Establish a multicultural committee to generate ideas for educating and celebrating the diverse cultures and backgrounds that enrich our Township.
- Prioritize road safety, particularly on Route 46, through collaboration with our police department and the State of New Jersey to find ways to make it safer.
- Allocate \$1 million for road resurfacing in my Budget to maintain a portion of the over 135 miles of Township roads.
- With funds that were allocated in the 2023 Budget, we will make significant improvements to Budd Lake Beach in 2024; something we've been working on for a very long time and hopefully we'll see it all this year coming up.
- Create a Veterans Day celebration to honor all Mount Olive Veterans that made such sacrifices for all of us.
- Collaborate with private companies to develop affordable housing for residents aged 62 and older who wish to remain in Town. A lot of people can't stay in Town because of the cost, so if we can help people who sell their homes and want to stay here with family and friends, it'll make a big difference as well.
- Work with internet providers to offer residents options for choosing their internet and TV provider.
- Grow our tax base creatively without compromising the beautiful open space and land we enjoy.
- Effective communication is vital, and I plan to utilize newspapers, social media, and videos to keep residents updated as well as all Township employees, so everyone can see what's going on in our Town and see the progress that we're making.
- In conclusion, I would like to express gratitude to the Township Council, our Business Administrator, Andrew Tatarenko, Finance Director Sherry Kolody, all directors, and department heads, and every municipal employee who worked diligently to keep our Township operating.

We have dedicated employees . . . I'm off script a minute because I kept a short State of the Township, which is good. We have dedicated employees here and all these people do such hard work and they really, really care about the Town, and that's what makes a difference, what I notice in here. So, I appreciate it and I know everyone else does as well and our residents should appreciate all the work that you do for all of us to keep this Town operating the way it does.

Together, let us continue to build upon the strong foundation that defines Mount Olive as a vibrant and caring community. Happy New Year to all and may God Bless America and Mount Olive Township.

Sincerely,

Joe Nicastro  
Mayor, Mount Olive Township

**APPOINTMENTS:**

**a. Mayor's Appointments**

**Morris County Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee**

Andrew Tatarenko, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

Claudia Quinn, Alternate, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Planning Board**

Howie Weiss, Member, Class IV, 4-year term expires 12/31/2027

William (Bill) Galop, Member, Class II, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

Ken Forlenza, Mayor's Designee, 4-year term expires 12/31/2027

John Batsch, Alt. I, Class IV, 2-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Environmental Committee**

Kathy Murphy, 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

Barama (Alicia) Sharma, 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

Robert Delpizzo, Alt. II, 2-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Open Space Committee**

Laura Szwak, 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

**b. Mayor's Appointments with Advice & Consent of Council**

**Business Administrator**, Andrew Tatarenko, 2-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Township Attorney**, Fred Semrau, Esq., 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Prosecutor**, Brian Mason, Esq., 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Public Defender**, Anthony Arbore Esq., 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Director of DPW**, Tim Quinn, 4-year term expires 12/31/2027

**Director of Health**, Trevor Weigle, 4-year term expires 12/31/2027

**Township Planner**, Chuck McGroarty, 4-year term expires 12/31/2027

**Township Consulting Engineer**, Michael G. Vreeland, 2-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Economic Development Committee**

John Batsch, 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

Steve Bedell, 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

Charles (Chuck) Aaron, 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

**Library Board**

Beth Blakey, 5-year term expires 12/31/2028

Marion Fleischner, 5-year term expires 12/31/2028

Recreation Advisory Committee

Louis Valdes, (MAC) 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

Antoine Gayles, (RAC) 3-year term expires 12/31/2026

Devon Vialva, (MAC) 3-year term 12/31/2026

Jennifer Aquino, BOE Liaison, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Mrs. Labow** moves for approval of the Mayor's Appointments with Advice and Consent of Council and **Mr. Mania** seconds.

**ROLL CALL: Passed unanimously**

**c. Council Appointments**

**All Subcommittees of the Township Council previously created are extended through 2024 except for the Board of Health Liaison and the Open Space Committee Liaison:**

**Board of Education Liaison**, Charles (Chuck) Aaron, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Committee RE: Lake/Environment Issues**, Colleen Labow, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Library Board Liaison**, John Ferrante, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Recreation Committee Liaison**, John Ferrante, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Legislative Committee**, John Mania, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Economic Development Committee Liaison**, Greg Stewart, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Planning Board**, John Mania, Council Member, Class III, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Senior Citizen Liaison**, Colleen Labow, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Board of Health Liaison/Chairperson**, Mary Lalama, 2-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Open Space Committee Liaison**, Colleen Labow, 4-year term expires 12/31/2027

**Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee**

Richard Escobar, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Deputy Township Clerk**

Susan Gouveia, 2-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Musconetcong River Management Council**

Robert Delpizzo, Full member, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

Christopher Sotiro, Alternate member, 1 year term expires 12/31/2024

**Musconetcong Sewerage Authority**

Steve Rattner, member, 5-year term expires 1/31/2029

Erik Bradely, member, 5-year term expires 12/31/2028

**Board of Health**

Vacancy, unexpired 3-year term expires 12/31/2025

**Ethics Committee**

Dana Benbow, 5-year term expires 12/31/2028

Lewis Candura Sr., 5-year term expires 12/31/2028

Marion Fleischner, 5-year term expires 12/31/2028

**Mrs. Labow** moves for approval of Council Appointments and **Mr. Stewart** seconds.

**ROLL CALL: Passed unanimously**

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**CONSENT RESOLUTIONS AGENDA:**

**Resolutions on Consent Agenda List are considered to be routine and non-controversial by the Township Council and will be approved by one motion (one vote). There will be no separate discussion or debate on each of these resolutions except for the possibility of brief clarifying statements which may be offered. If one or more council members requests, any individual resolution on the consent agenda may be removed from the Consent Agenda List and acted on separately.**

1. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Establishing the Annual Schedule of Meetings and Designating the Official Newspapers for 2024.
2. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Establishing a Petty Cash Fund for 2024.
3. Resolution of the Township of Mount Olive Authorizing the Cancellation of Water, Sewer, Sewer Assessment and Tax Receivable Overpayments and Balances \$1.00 or Less.
4. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Fixing the Rate of Interest to be Charged on Delinquent Taxes or Assessments.
5. Resolution of the Township of Mount Olive Authorizing a Cash Management Plan for the Township of Mount Olive for the Year 2024.
6. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Establishing a Temporary Budget for 2024 for the Current, Water, Sewer and Recreation Utility as well as the Sanitation District.
7. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Establishing Various Change Funds for the Year 2024.

8. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Authorizing the Tax Assessor and/or the Township Attorney to File and Prosecute Tax Appeals/Rollbacks.
9. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Appointing Richard Escobar as Council Representative to the Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee.
10. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive, Creating and Continuing the Mount Olive Municipal Alliance Committee.
11. A Resolution of the Township of Mount Olive, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, Appointing a Municipal Housing Liaison. (Chuck McGroarty)
12. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Appointing Claudia Quinn, Assistant Business Administrator to the Morris County Joint Insurance Fund as the Fund Commissioner and Andrew Tatarenko, Business Administrator, as the Alternate Commissioner for 2024.
13. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Designating Robyn Esposito as the Public Agency Compliance Officer “PACO” for 2024.
14. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Designating Andrew Tatarenko as the Qualified Purchasing Agent for 2024.
15. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Appointing Timothy Quinn, DPW Director, as the Certified Recycling Coordinator for 2024.
16. Resolution of the Township of Mount Olive, in the County of Morris and State of New Jersey, Authorizing the Appointment of Police Chaplains.
17. Resolution of the Council of Mount Olive Township Authorizing the Appointment of Special Law Enforcement Officers for the 2024/2025 School Year and Crossing Guards for the 2024/2025 School Year.
18. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Reappointing Steve Rattner and Appointing Erik Bradely as members to the Musconetcong Sewerage Authority.
19. Resolution of the Township Council of the Township of Mount Olive Appointing Robert Delpizzo to the Musconetcong River Management Council as a Full Member and Christopher Sotiro as an Alternate Member for 2024.
20. A Resolution of the Township of Mount Olive, in the County of Morris and State of New Jersey, Appointing Andrew Tatarenko as Emergency Management Coordinator, and Michael Spitzer & Eric Anthony as Deputy Emergency Management Coordinators.

**Mr. Aaron** moves for approval of Consent Resolutions and **Mrs. Labow** seconds.

**President Roman** clarifies this is for Consent Resolutions one through twenty. There was no public discussion.

**Roll Call:**                   **Passed unanimously**

**Public Portion - none**

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Mr. Aaron** wishes everybody a merry Christmas and happy New Year. He expresses his excitement about being able to serve on the Council again and looks forward to serving under Mayor Nicastro.

**Mr. Stewart** echoes Mr. Aaron’s comments and congratulates and welcomes the new Mayor, Council President, and Council Vice President. He also thanks the community for joining the meeting.

**Mrs. Labow** wishes everybody happy holidays and thanks everybody. She points out that she has been elected to a sixth term, which has not been done before. She expresses her honor and states she’ll continue to do the best that she can to help all of the residents.

**Mrs. Lalama** thanks everyone for attending the meeting. She expresses her appreciation of the support of her family and friends. She congratulates Joe Nicastro on being the new Mayor. She also congratulates the new Council President and Vice President. She then wishes everyone a happy New Year.

**Mr. Mania** wishes everyone a happy and healthy New Year. He congratulates Mayor Nicastro, President Roman, and Vice President Ferrante.

**Mr. Ferrante** congratulates Mayor Nicastro, Councilman Aaron, Councilwoman Lalama, and Councilwoman Labow. He thanks the Council for selecting him as Vice President and congratulates President Roman.

**Mr. Roman** congratulates Mayor Nicastro, Councilman Aaron, Councilwoman Labow, and Councilwoman Lalama. He thanks the audience for attending the meeting. He also recognizes Morris County Commissioner Stephen Shaw, Morris County Surrogate Heather Darling, and former Mayors Paul Licitra and David Scapicchio. He expresses gratitude toward the Township employees.

**Mayor Nicastro** thanks everybody for attending the meeting and congratulates the new Chief of Police, Michael Spitzer. He then invites everyone to a reception at the Senior Center.

**BENEDICTION - Pastor Matt Jones**

**ADJOURNMENT** - Motion made and seconded. All in favor, none opposed, the meeting was adjourned at 7:38pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alex Roman, Council President

I, Michelle Masser, Township Clerk of Mount Olive do hereby certify that the foregoing Minutes are a true and correct copy of the Minutes approved at a legally convened meeting of the Mount Olive Township Council duly held on January 23, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Masser, Township Clerk

js