

Borough of Palisades Park
275 Broad Avenue
County of Bergen
State of New Jersey

Work Session
of the Mayor & Council
June 16, 2026

BOROUGH OF PALISADES PARK REGULAR MEETING
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 16, 2026, 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Chong Paul Kim called the Borough of Palisades Park Regular Meeting to order on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with New Jersey law. Notice was filed on January 13, 2026, with The Record and the Newark Star Ledger, both official newspapers of the Borough. Notice was also posted on the Bulletin Board at Borough Hall and on the Borough website at <https://palisadesKwaknj.org/>. A copy is preserved in the Clerk's Office.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence led by Councilwoman Won-Yoon.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Kim	Present
Councilman Donohue	Present
Councilman Kwak	Present
Council President Lee	Present Via Zoom
Councilman Min	Present
Councilman Shin	Present
Councilwoman Won-Yoon	Present
Borough Attorney Phil Gertner	Present
Borough Administrator Roberta Stern	Present

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- Special Meeting of Mayor and Council — April 6, 2026
- Executive Session of Mayor and Council — April 6, 2026
- Work Session of the Mayor and Council — April 21, 2026
- Executive Session of Mayor and Council — April 21, 2026
- Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council — April 28, 2026
- Executive Session of Mayor and Council — April 28, 2026
- Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council — May 26, 2026

Mayor Kim stated that the minutes for the April 28 Regular Meeting were not currently available. After speaking with the Borough Clerk, he said the minutes would be prepared and presented at the upcoming Regular Meeting.

Councilwoman Won-Yoon asked about the May Executive Session minutes. After discussion, it was clarified that there had been an Executive Session associated with the May 26 Regular Meeting, although Borough Clerk Sophia Jang stated she had not received any records. Ms. Jang explained that she had been absent from the meeting and had previously asked Laura Borchers about the records but was told none were available. She agreed to verify the matter with Ms. Borchers again. Borough Administrator Roberta Stern offered to coordinate with Ms. Borchers and Ted Del Guercio to reconstruct or obtain the records. Del Guercio indicated that he could assist.

Mayor Kim directed that the matter be investigated and that the information be provided to the Council. Ms. Stern replied the Executive Session was for continuing affordable housing litigation and settlement.

At this time the Council went into Executive Session. Mayor Kim then requested a motion to close the Work Session and enter Executive Session. Councilman Kwak made the motion, seconded by Councilman Donohue, and all members voted in favor.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE 2026-16 — Establishment of Ordinance for the Storage of Salt and other Solid De-Icing Materials on property not owned or Operated by the Municipality (Privately-owned), including residences, in the Borough of Palisades Park

The Borough Clerk read the title of Ordinance 2026-16 into the record. Borough Administrator Roberta provided context, explaining that the Borough's stormwater ordinances have not been fully up to date, and that Colliers Engineering was previously authorized to assist with updating and introducing new stormwater-related ordinances. Ordinance 2026-16 is a new ordinance — not an amendment — addressing the proper storage of salt and solid de-icing materials on privately owned properties. The Administrator stated that the Borough is mandated by the state DEP and EPA to protect water resources and the environment, and that this ordinance is one part of that broader update effort.

Mayor Kim clarified to the governing body that council members who had questions were encouraged to direct them to the Borough Administrator during the week prior to the vote at the next regular meeting.

ORDINANCE 2026-17 through ORDINANCE 2026-20 — Stormwater-Related Ordinances

The Borough Administrator confirmed that Ordinances 2026-17, 2026-18, 2026-19, and 2026-20, which address residential yard waste management, the feeding of unconfined wildlife, illicit connections to the storm sewer system, and pet solid waste disposal respectively, were not ready for introduction at this meeting. These items were identified as technically amendments to existing ordinances rather than new ordinances, and a miscommunication had led to their placement on the agenda. Mayor Kim directed that these four ordinances be formally stricken from tonight's agenda.

ORDINANCE 2026-21 — Calendar Year 2026 Ordinance To Exceed the Municipal Budget Cost of Living Allowance and Establish a Cap Bank

Roy Mr. Riggitano CFO presented Ordinance 2026-21. He explained that this is a procedural ordinance, required by law, that establishes a cost of living allowance cap bank for the following budget year. The ordinance moves the municipal budget cap from 2% to 3.5%, establishing a cap bank of approximately \$772,000 for the coming year. Mr. Riggitano stated that this is a non-spending appropriation done annually, and that without the cap bank established in prior years, the Borough's fiscal situation would have been considerably worse. No substantive questions were raised, and council members were directed to review the ordinance prior to the vote at the next meeting.

2ND READING OF ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE 2026-12 — Bond Ordinance to Authorize the Making of Various Public Improvements In, By and For the Borough of Palisades Park ... to Appropriately the Sum of \$915,000

The Borough Clerk read the title into the record. Borough Administrator Roberta explained that this bond ordinance appropriates \$915,000 to finance three existing grants: (1) Broad Avenue Streetscape from Washington to East Etzel; (2) Broad Avenue from Edsall to West Oak Dene; and (3) East Palisades Boulevard. She clarified that this appropriation ensures funds are available when the grant-funded work is ready to proceed.

ORDINANCE 2026-13 — Bond Ordinance to Authorize the Resurfacing of Various Roads... to Appropriately the Sum of \$420,000

The Borough Administrator explained that unlike Ordinance 2026-12, this \$420,000 bond is not tied to any specific project. Its purpose is to provide financial flexibility to cover cost overruns on projects where bids come in higher than the original grant award amounts. She illustrated this with an example: a grant awarded for \$249,000 may now bid at \$360,000 due to increased material and engineering costs. This bond provides the mechanism to cover that gap without halting project progress. A public hearing was held.

ORDINANCE 2026-14 — Amending Chapter 247 "Sewers" of the Code of the Borough of Palisades Park
Mayor Kim confirmed that due diligence on this ordinance had been performed with the building department. The Borough Administrator confirmed it was prepared with the building department's input and that the primary purpose of the amendment was to update significantly deficient sewer-related fees, along with a few other procedural details. A public hearing was held.

ORDINANCE 2026-15 — Amending the Code of the Borough of Palisades Park to Authorize the Borough Clerk to Approve Certain Annual Raffle License Applications

The Borough Administrator explained that this amendment streamlines the process for recurring annual raffle license applications submitted by the same organizations with no material changes year over year. Under this ordinance, the Borough Clerk would be authorized to approve such applications administratively, without requiring them to come before the full council. Any new organizations, or any applications with changed language, would still require council review. A public hearing was held.

OFF CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTION 2026-192 — Introduction of Municipal Budget Year of 2026

Roy Riggitano CFO presented the introduction of the 2026 Municipal Budget, explaining that the budget had taken several months to prepare. He stated that the public would have an opportunity to review and comment on the budget during the required 28-day period following introduction, with a public hearing scheduled for **July 21 at 6:00 p.m.** A PowerPoint presentation, along with the auditing firm, would provide the public with details of the budget.

Mr. Riggitano credited the Finance Committee and the municipal auditors for developing a budget that remained within the State-mandated cap without reducing municipal services. He stated that the budget reflected approximately **\$565,000 per household, or slightly more than \$120 per quarter**, and stated that the Borough was facing significant increases in health benefits, pensions, and garbage costs, while maintaining staffing levels. He stated that the increase was generally in line with other Bergen County communities.

Mayor Kim asked whether extraordinary costs associated with lawsuits were excluded from the budget figures. Mr. Riggitano explained that without the lawsuits, there would have been a significant additional dollar increase.

The governing body discussed the timing of the introduction, the required 28-day review period, and whether the matter should be handled during a Work Session or at a Special Meeting. Mr. Riggitano stated that the

budget was already late and needed to be introduced immediately so it could be submitted to the State for review. The public hearing and potential adoption would occur after the required 28-day period.

Councilwoman Won-Yoon expressed concern about voting on the budget after only recently receiving the budget information. Mr. Riggitano stated that the Council would have the 28-day period to review it and ask questions. Council President Lee also raised concerns about the budget presentation conflicting with the scheduled Work Session. It was clarified that the **budget hearing would begin at 6:00 p.m. on July 21, followed by consideration of adoption**, and that the budget could be amended before adoption if necessary.

Mayor Kim stated that the budget needed to be acted upon promptly and that the Council would have the 28-day period to review it and raise questions. He emphasized that the **Finance Committee was responsible for reviewing the budget and presenting its recommendation to the governing body**, while other Council members could ask questions and provide comments during the review period.

Mayor Kim then requested a motion to approve **Off-Consent Agenda Resolution 2026-192**, introducing the 2026 Municipal Budget. He stated that Councilman Shin and Council President Lee would work with Mr. Riggitano, Roberta Stern, and himself on the budget, while the remaining Council members could submit questions during the 28-day review period.

Council President Lee made the first motion which was seconded by Councilman Shin. The motion carried on a roll call vote and was recorded as follows:

Councilman Donohue	Yes
Councilman Kwak	Yes
Council President Lee	Yes
Councilman Min	Abstain
Councilman Shin	Yes
Councilwoman Won-Yoon	Abstain

Mayor Kim stated for the record that abstentions on a procedural introduction of this nature were not in keeping with the responsibilities of council members.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution 2026-189 was removed from the consent agenda at the request of the Borough Administrator. **Resolutions 2026-190 and 2026-191** Council President Lee provided context explaining that these two resolutions are part of a broader initiative to strengthen the Borough's personnel administration structure. **Resolution 2026-190** establishes a uniform hiring process for all full-time Borough positions, requiring that vacancies be publicly posted on the Borough website before any appointment is made. **Resolution 2026-191** establishes a uniform mid-year and year-end evaluation process for all Borough employees. Council President Lee also stated that a third complementary resolution, setting standards for workplace conduct and professionalism, will be introduced in July. Council members discussed whether the hiring process should extend to part-time positions, and Council President Lee clarified that the resolution sets minimum legal standards applicable to full-time positions, while part-time employees would still be folded into the evaluation process as a pathway to any full-time appointment. Councilman Donohue inquired about the specific evaluation form that would be used, and the Borough Administrator confirmed that a standard municipal evaluation instrument, adapted to the Borough's needs, was being finalized.

Regarding claims, Councilman Shin raised questions distinguishing between the animal account and the dog trust line items. Mr. Roy Mr. Riggitano CFO explained that the dog trust account represents revenues from cat and dog licenses issued locally, while the animal account relates to the Borough's share of county services for animal control, roadkill, and pest control. Councilman Shin also sought clarification on an expenditure listed as affordable housing rent cost, which appeared against a zero balance in the affordable housing rental account. The Borough Administrator clarified that these bills were incurred over a year ago for work performed at 83 Center Place, the Borough's senior housing complex, which had been frozen by court order. Following a recent consent order entered after the Fair Share settlement, the account was released and these outstanding bills were promptly paid from rental income collected from the tenants of that building. The Borough Attorney confirmed the distinction between this matter and the administrative expenditure caps associated with the Fair Share settlement.

Resolutions 2026-173 through 2026-177, Mr. Roy Mr. Riggitano CFO and the Tax Assessor/Collector explained that these resolutions authorize payments totaling approximately \$96,000 to satisfy State Tax Court judgments. The assessor stated that each judgment carries a docket number and has been reviewed and signed off by both the plaintiff's and the Borough's attorneys. Roy confirmed that reserved funds are available. Mayor Kim stated the importance of complying with the statutory 45-to-60-day refund window, beyond which interest accretes back to the original payment date.

Resolution 2026-169, Councilman Shin inquired about the change order authorizing additional costs on the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and Highland Avenue project. The Borough Administrator explained that during excavation, PSE&G utility pipes were encountered that were not visible in the original design drawings because the prior engineer, Pennoni, did not perform infrared studies. Colliers Engineering, serving in the inspection role on this project, encountered conflict in the field and responded accordingly. The Administrator characterized the situation as an unforeseen condition typical of construction work, unrelated to any failure of either engineering firm.

Resolutions 2026-182 and 2026-183 hiring of police officers Tong Lee and Jayden Dorilas, Councilman Shin, serving as Police Committee Chair, explained that four candidates all known to the department as

special police officers were interviewed by a hiring evaluation committee. Two were selected. The new officers will apply for the police academy beginning in November and are expected to begin full duties in early 2027. Councilman Shin stated that the long lead time is necessary for hiring well in advance of need, and that the hiring process followed the transparent, fair procedures previously discussed by the council.

Resolution 2026-171, extending the temporary suspension of Parking meter zone payment requirements, was briefly stated. Councilman Kwak stated that signage indicating the Parking extensions should be made clearer and more prominently displayed.

Resolution 2026-166, authorization of liquor license renewals for 2026–2027, will be resubmitted before the regular meeting once additional review is complete.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Council President Lee acknowledged the introduction of the 2026 budget as the result of a team effort and encouraged all residents and council members to attend the July 21 budget hearing to ask questions and participate in the process.

Councilman Shin reported that in May, the DPW conducted 11 days of street sweeping, Electronics collection: 64, Appliance collection: 63, Matter collection: 140, Sign replacement and Installation: 28

Councilman Min: Provided no report.

Councilman Kwak reported on recent and upcoming events:

- The Police Department’s Special Olympics Torch Run was recognized as a successful community event.
- The Chamber of Commerce Street Festival was held and went well, featuring performances and vendor activities.
- The new spray park at the swim club is nearly complete. All fixtures have been installed and tested. The remaining work is the rubberization of the surrounding floor area for child safety. Councilman Kwak thanked the Borough Administrator for her work on this project.
- A Family Swim Night is scheduled for June 29, 2026, from 5:30 to 8:00 PM at the Palisades Park Swim Club, open to borough residents. The event will feature free food, free ice cream, and inflatable water slides.
- The Palisades Park Public Library will undergo a renovation of the building’s fascia, expected to commence at the end of June or beginning of July and be completed by September. Councilman Kwak also stated that library staff had dealt with incidents involving unruly youth and residents smoking outside the building, and he called on the community to ensure respectful behavior. A no-smoking sign is to be posted at the entrance.
- A Knicks watch party was organized on short notice for the NBA playoffs and was well received. Councilman Kwak thanked the Recreation Department, the Police Department, Mayor Kim, and the many staff members who made the event possible in under two days.
- Three World Cup watch parties are scheduled at Lindbergh Field (weekdays) and the High School (weekends):
 - June 18, 8:30–11:30 PM — Korea vs. Mexico (Lindbergh Field; wood-fired pizza truck and giveaways)
 - June 25, 9:30 PM–12:30 AM — USA vs. Turkey (Lindbergh Field)
 - June 27, 8:30–11:30 PM — Colombia vs. Portugal (High School)

Councilman Kwak requested that event details be posted to the Borough website and the marquee. He also recognized Councilman Frank Donohue for personally covering the charges for a post-senior-prom swim night for students at the swim club.

ATTORNEY REPORT

No report

BA REPORT

The Borough Administrator reported on a FIFA World Cup watch party that had taken place on June 11th, featuring the Korea vs. Czech Republic match. The event was organized by the KNY and J Host Committee, a nonprofit organization, with no Borough involvement or funding. The Administrator stated it was well-attended and that the Borough was fortunate to host one of two such watch parties in town, with another to follow.

Police Report

No report

ENGINEER REPORTS

No report

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ernst Beerley asked about the possibility of extending free Parking. Mayor Kim stated that an extension had not yet been approved but that the Borough was proposing to continue free Parking for an additional three (3) months. Mayor Kim said that he, Councilman Shin, Councilman Kwak, and the Police Department had reviewed the Parking situation and found that most merchants supported free Parking after 6:00 p.m. because they believed it helped their businesses. Some restaurant owners, however, were concerned that the

free Parking affected their ability to have customers move in and out within the two-hour period. Mr. Beerley stated that some municipalities did not charge for Parking. Mayor Kim responded that the cost would ultimately have to be paid by residents through taxes. Mr. Beerley then asked about the municipal pool. Borough Administrator Roberta Stern reported that the pool had initially been open only on weekends and had experienced an emergency involving two broken pipes that caused the lap pool to be closed for approximately two weeks. The pool had to be drained, and the area excavated to locate and repair the broken pipes. Ms. Stern confirmed that the repairs had been completed and the pool was fully operational.

Stern also reported that the splash pad portion of the pool project was completed, but the Borough was waiting for a contractor to apply a rubber coating around the concrete area to improve safety. Mayor Kim commented that the children would enjoy the splash pad.

Mayor Kim requested a motion to close the public participation section and come back to the Work Session.

Councilman Kwak made the first motion which was seconded by member Donohue.

All were in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Kim requested a motion to close the Work Session.

Councilman Kwak made the first motion which was seconded by Councilman Donohue.

All were in favor.

I CERTIFY THIS TO BE A TRUE COPY OF MINUTES APPROVED AT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING ON
AUGUST 25, 2026



Laura Borchers RMC, CMR
Interim Borough Clerk.

