

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP
OF WANTAGE, ON
FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

Mayor VanderGroef called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and requested that the Clerk call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the governing body were present: Committeeman Ron Bassani, Deputy Mayor Justin Dudzinski, Mayor Justin VanderGroef. Also present: Attorney Louis Karp, Melissa Morales, Township Clerk and Michael Restel, Administrator.

Mayor VanderGroef stated, "This meeting is being held in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231. It has been properly noticed and certified by the Clerk."

Mayor VanderGroef requested a moment of silence for Mark Wallace, who passed away.

APPOINTMENT

Mayor VanderGroef announced the appointment of Adrian Jinks to the LEPC Committee as Evacuation Coordinator.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to approve Resolution #51-2026 through #59-2026 with the removal of PO #21888 for C&E Tires in the amount of \$440.00

Mr. Bassani made a motion to pull and discuss Resolutions #55-2026 through #57-2026 and seconded by Mr. Dudzinski.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mr. Restel and Attorney Karp reviewed the Resolutions. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Bassani made a motion to approve Resolutions #55-2026 through #57-2026 and seconded by Mr. Dudzinski.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mr. Bassani made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and seconded by Mr. Dudzinski.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mr. Bassani made a motion to approve PO #21888 for C&E Tires in the amount of \$440.00 and seconded by Mr. Dudzinski.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: VanderGroef

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to add and approve Resolution #60-2026, Resolution extending the 2026 Temporary Budget.

Mr. Bassani made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and seconded by Mr. Dudzinski.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

REPORTS

Administrator/Clerk: Mr. Restel attended a film event on 2/25, which was very informative. Mr. Restel attended the Chamber dinner on 2/19. Mr. Restel stated the DPW did a great job during the last snow. Mr. Restel attended the 250th Committee meeting on 2/27 at 11 am. Mr. Restel stated we will have a budget presentation on 3/5. Mr. Restel stated he is waiting for the adjuster to move forward with the repairs in the municipal building.

Attorney's Report: Mr. Karp offered no report.

Mayor's Report: Mayor VanderGroef stated he was interviewed on 2/25 by a local cub scout. Mayor VanderGroef attended the film event as well. It was very informative. Mayor VanderGroef attended the Frankford Township meeting. On their agenda were short-term rentals. He received good information from the meeting. Mayor VanderGroef attended the Mayor Meeting on Sat 2/21 at the Hampton Diner. Mayor VanderGroef stated we had a special meeting and budget meeting on 2/18. Mayor VanderGroef stated DPW did a great job during the snowstorm. Mayor VanderGroef addressed the dog waste issue at Woodbourne Park.

Deputy Mayor Dudzinski: Mr. Dudzinski held a brief discussion on short-term rentals and recommended looking at Montague Townships' ordinance. Mr. Dudzinski asked about what happened to the damaged mailboxes by DPW due to the snow events.

Committeeman Bassani: Mr. Bassani asked about the salt transfer on the bills list and asked if there was a cheaper option on the fax line.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Mayor and Committee Meeting on February 12, 2026. (absent Mr. Bassani)

Mr. Dudzinski made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. VanderGroef

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: Bassani

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Mayor and Committee Budget Meeting and Special Meeting on February 18, 2026.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

ORDINANCE;

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to adopt Ordinance #03-2026 an Ordinance amending the revised general ordinances of the Township of Wantage Chapter XXI of the Municipal code of the Township of Wantage entitled fees by amending section 21-10 to adjust the fees contained therein.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Mayor VanderGroef opened the meeting to the public. There were no public comments.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to adopt the Ordinance #04-2026 an Ordinance amending the revised general Ordinances of the Township of Wantage, Chapter 13 Zoning, Section 13-25.2 permits and Chapter 140 Land Use and Development Regulations, Section 140-128.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Mayor VanderGroef opened the meeting to the public. There were no public comments.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to introduce Ordinance #05-2026 an Ordinance of the Township of Wantage, County of Sussex, State of New Jersey repealing and replacing Chapter 27 Affordable Housing of the revised general ordinances of the Township to repealing section 13-5.10 growth share ordinance to comply with the New Jersey Fair Housing Act and affordable housing obligations and repealing Chapter 27 affordable housing and adopting new Chapter 27 affordable housing.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to introduce Ordinance #06-2026 an ordinance amending the revised general ordinances of the Township of Wantage, Chapter 13, Zoning, adding §13-24.24 Mandatory Set-Aside.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to introduce Ordinance #07-2026 an Ordinance amending the revised general ordinances of the Township of Wantage, Chapter 13, Zoning, §13-4B, §13-4C and §13-4D.

Mr. Bassani requested additional information on this ordinance. After discussion, revisions were made as per the Attorney, Louis Karp.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski, as revised.

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to introduce Ordinance #08-2026 an Ordinance appropriating the sum of \$25,000.00 for improvements to the Township Building.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski

Upon Roll Call:

Ayes: Bassani, Dudzinski, VanderGroef Nays: None Absent: None Abstain: None

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

Ann Smulewicz, Ms. Smulewicz voiced her concerns about the building department.

Kathy Gorman, Fernwood Rd., Mrs. Gorman stated when Shoprite was being built, there was a period when they were unable to do any construction due to an eagle's nest in the area. Mr. Gorman asked if there were any restrictions during construction on the liquor store. Mrs. Gorman asked if there was any interest in the environmental grant.

Cody Yaworsky, Haggerty Rd., Mr. Yaworsky asked the committee to look into setting hours during filming

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor VanderGroef requested a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Bassani made a Motion and was seconded by Mr. Dudzinski
All were in favor.

Meeting Adjourned 8:56 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Melissa Morales
Township Clerk