

**MINUTES OF THE REORGANIZATION MEETING OF THE ALLAMUCHY  
TOWNSHIP COUNCIL HELD JANUARY 5, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M.**

Mayor Tuohy called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

The Township Council convened in open session at 6:30 p.m. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence for personal intentions.

The Municipal Clerk announced that adequate notice of the time, place, and manner of this public Council meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by:

- (1) posting said notice on the municipal building bulletin board.
- (2) emailing said notice to the press and all others who have requested it.
- (3) posting on the official Township website.

Roll Call Vote: **PRESENT** - Mayor Tuohy, Councilwoman Bonanno, Councilwoman Chamberlin, Councilman Fabula and Councilman Quinoa.

Attorney Beilin was also present.

1. **STATEMENT OF DETERMINATION** – The Municipal Clerk read the Statement of Determination for Councilman Edward Fabula and Councilman Manuel “Manny” Quinoa as certified by the Warren County Board of Elections.
2. **OATH OF OFFICE** – Mayor Tuohy administered the Oath of Office to Councilman Fabula and Councilman Quinoa.
3. **STATE OF THE MUNICIPALITY ADDRESS PRESENTED BY MAYOR TUOHY.**

At this time, Mayor Tuohy read the State of Municipality Address into the record (attached).

Good evening, friends, neighbors, council members, and staff.

As we welcome a new year, I am honored to share the progress we've made and the vision we hold for Allamuchy Township - a community defined by its natural beauty, strong sense of belonging, and steadfast commitment to preserving the quality of life that makes our township so special.

**Reflecting on 2025**

Over the past year, we remained focused on fiscal responsibility while making strategic investments in the services our residents rely on. Following the retirement of our longtime Chief Financial Officer in early 2025, we strengthened our financial operations by entering into a Shared Services Agreement with Clinton Township for a part-time CFO, and by hiring additional support staff in the Finance Department. To further improve compliance and efficiency, we executed a Professional Service Agreement for a Qualified Purchasing Agent, ensuring adherence to state purchasing regulations.

In addition, the township has executed a Shared Services Agreement with the Allamuchy Board of Education to provide fueling services for school buses. This initiative is projected to generate significant cost savings for the school district. Furthermore, the township is actively evaluating additional shared service opportunities to enhance efficiency and reduce expenses.

In 2025, the Township revised employee health care benefits by eliminating high cost insurance plans, transitioning to high-deductible health plans, and providing Health Care Spending Accounts to ensure employees are made whole. This initiative began in 2026 and is saving the Township tens of thousands of dollars annually.

Throughout these transitions, our municipal budget remained balanced, and we continued to uphold our core principles of transparency and operational excellence.

When I took office in 2022, my priority was to stabilize the municipal tax rate and reduce costs. Despite year-over-year inflation, the **municipal portion** of the average homeowner's property tax increased only **modestly - about \$7 per year; or roughly \$21 from 2022 to 2024. In 2025, there was no increase** in the municipal tax rate; the municipal tax on that same assessment of \$350,000.00 **remained flat.**

Thank you to our council members and staff for helping achieve this result while maintaining essential services. This Council will continue to be prudent stewards of taxpayers' money.

### **Infrastructure & Road Improvements**

This year, we completed several significant paving projects that improved safety, accessibility, and convenience for residents, including:

- Cornerstone Development
- Freeborn Lane
- Parking Area at Green Acres Fields
- Municipal Parking Lots

These projects were funded through a combination of grants and allocations from our Capital Improvement Fund - investing wisely without placing undue burden on taxpayers.

### **Energy Efficiency & Sustainability**

We also advanced sustainability and cost savings. In 2025, the township received grant incentives for energy-efficient upgrades. We modernized all HVAC systems and lighting at Town Hall and the Allamuchy Fire Department. Through these efforts, the township's financial responsibility was \$142,000.00 out of a \$571,400.00 total project cost-allowing us to complete critical work without relying solely on local tax dollars. These upgrades

will reduce energy consumption, lower operating costs, and create a more comfortable environment for staff and visitors. In 2026, we will be pursuing the same grant incentives for energy efficient upgrades to our water and sewer plant.

### **Water & Sewer Infrastructure**

Our water and sewer infrastructure is aging, and staffing the plant has become more challenging due to retirements throughout the State and fewer new professionals entering the field. Despite these realities, we have made important progress:

We are completing a 65,000-gallon water-holding tank at the plant. This project received 50% principal forgiveness through the NJ State I-Bank, with the balance covered by a low-interest loan. This tank complements the larger 600,000-gallon tank on Tower Road, replaced in 2022 - ensuring continued reliability of our drinking water system.

We executed a Professional Service Contract for water main leak detection loggers, allowing us to be proactive rather than reactive in addressing water main breaks.

Looking ahead, final engineering plans for the sand filter replacement at the sewer plant are nearing completion. This project is estimated at approximately \$2,000,000. The township also needs to start planning for water main replacement which can run in the millions of dollars.

The reality is that our system is aging, and the pipeline of professionals entering this field is not keeping pace. Currently, the township relies on two consulting firms working alongside our two full-time employees to operate the water and sewer plant day-to-day.

We have been approached by companies interested in purchasing our water and sewer utility. This is a critical conversation. Our current user fees cannot cover the necessary infrastructure updates without raising rates and incurring debt through bonding. In the coming months, we will engage residents in a transparent discussion about the best path forward-whether that's public ownership with new investments or exploring a sale. Your input will be essential to making the right decision for Allamuchy.

### **Recreation & Community Engagement**

Allamuchy remains committed to enhancing recreational opportunities and strengthening the connections that make our township a vibrant place to live. For the second consecutive year, we secured a Recreational Grant - this time for \$82,000 - to refurbish a parcel of open space we purchased in 2023. This land is part of the statewide Rails to Trails initiative, and our investment will help connect Allamuchy's trail system to neighboring communities, creating new opportunities for outdoor recreation.

In 2024, our first recreational grant helped fund upgrades to the Allamuchy Township Playground, completed in December 2025, creating a safe and modern space for families to

enjoy. In 2026, we plan to pursue another grant to expand and enhance our recreational facilities. We value community input and look forward to engaging residents in conversations about these improvements.

Beyond physical upgrades, we've introduced programs that bring people together. Game Night at Hafner Hall, held every Thursday evening, has become a popular tradition - giving residents a welcoming space to gather, play cards and board games, and connect with neighbors. Last summer, we proudly celebrated Warren County's 250th Anniversary with a signature firework event that showcased Allamuchys' community spirit. Thanks to community partnerships, sponsorships, township staff and volunteers, township costs were minimized, and resident feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Building on this success, we are already planning for America's 250th Anniversary in Summer 2026. This celebration will include expanded programming, a patriotic ceremony and veterans' recognition, to ensure a memorable experience for all. More details will be shared in the months ahead.

### **Affordable Housing Mandates**

In 2025, the Township continued its work on Affordable Housing requirements under the Fourth Round Present and Prospective Need, as outlined by the amended Fair Housing Act. Initially, the Township was directed to provide 281 affordable housing units over the next ten years. We objected and submitted a formal planning report to the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program indicating our obligation was 55. We appeared for mediation before the program judge who issued an Order that Allamuchy was obligated for 95 affordable housing units. We recently had a settlement conference with Fair Share Housing Center in which the Township agreed to plan for 29 affordable housing units in the Highlands Preservation area should sewer service ever be permitted by state agencies. The Town Council will be voting on this Settlement Agreement this evening.

This outcome represents a major win for Allamuchy Township, significantly reducing the initial mandate while ensuring compliance with state requirements.

I wish to convey my profound appreciation to Councilwoman Suzanne Chamberlin, David Novak, Township Planner and Richard Beilin, Township Attorney for their outstanding leadership and instrumental role in addressing this critical issue confronting our township. Their dedication and tireless efforts have been pivotal in advancing solutions that will benefit our community for years to come.

### **Closing**

Together, we've achieved meaningful progress-in stabilizing taxes, improving roads, upgrading facilities, investing in recreation, and planning for the future. Together, we'll meet the challenges ahead-particularly the critical decisions surrounding our water and sewer systems.

The township remains steadfast in its commitment to identifying and securing grant opportunities that bring additional resources into our community. By leveraging these funds, we ensure that local tax dollars are reinvested where they have the greatest impact, thereby reducing the financial burden on our residents and promoting long-term fiscal responsibility.

I'm grateful to our council members, staff, first responders, volunteers, partners, businesses and residents for your dedication to Allamuchy Township. Your voice matters. I invite you to participate in our upcoming meetings and workshops, share your ideas, and help us shape the next chapter of our community.

I would be remiss not to recognize Dr. Chuck Seipp, Superintendent of Allamuchy Township School District. His commitment to community engagement, transparency, and excellence aligns closely with ours. I look forward to the continued progress and opportunities 2026 will bring for our students and school district.

Let's continue working hand in hand to keep Allamuchy a place we're proud to call home. In closing, we wish you a very healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.

May God Bless You and May God Bless the United States of America.



Rosemary Tuohy

**4. OFFICERS OF THE ALLAMUCHY TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR 2026:**

Mayor Tuohy announced the 2026 Officers of the ATVFD:

- a. Chief Michael Rafferty
- b. Assistant Chief David Berkenbush
- c. Captain Ryan Durling
- d. Lieutenant Nathan Mundi
- e. Head Steward Cameron Rozell

Mayor Tuohy advised that the officers will be sworn in by her on January 17, 2026 at the Allamuchy Township Fire Department Installation Dinner.

**5. NOMINATION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT/ACTING MAYOR BY MAYOR TUOHY:**

**COUNCILWOMAN DEBORAH BONANNO**

Councilwoman Chamberlin nominated Councilwoman Bonanno.

Motion by Councilwoman Chamberlin, seconded by Councilman Quinoa, carried to nominate Councilwoman Bonanno as Council President/Acting Mayor. Roll call vote: **AYES** - Councilpersons Chamberlin, Fabula, Quinoa, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

**6. NOMINATION OF THE FOLLOWING STANDING COMMITTEES:**

- a. **Budget/Finance Committee** - Mayor Rosemary Tuohy & Deborah Bonanno, Council President
- b. **Musconetcong River Management Council** – Charles Fineran and Councilman Edward Fabula – Alternate.
- c. **Municipal Water & Sewer Utility Advisory Committee** - Mark Burton, JES, Rosemary Tuohy Mayor, Matt Begley, Ken Dunlap, Rich Evans, Art Schmelter, Ronald Karl, Royal Nadeau, Kristen Colavito – Secretary
- d. **Special Municipal Services District Commission** – Sal Maggio - 2 Year Term 01/01/26 to 12/31/2027.

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Councilman Fabula, carried to approve the following standing committees as presented. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilpersons Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

**7. RESOLUTIONS: (ATTACHMENTS 1-21) – APPROVED AS A CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. 2026-01 - Designating Official Depositories
- b. 2026-02 - Designation of Official Newspapers
- c. 2026-03 - Fixing Fees for Delinquent Taxes or Assessments
- d. 2026-04 - Dishonored Check Fee
- e. 2026-05 - Open Public Meetings Act (Sunshine Law) Township Workshop Meetings
- f. 2026-06 - Open Public Meetings Act (Sunshine Law) Township Regular Meetings
- g. 2026-07 - Authorization to Retain Professional Services Vis-à-Vis Local Public Contracts Law
- h. 2026-08 - Professional and Other One-Year Appointments
- i. 2026-09 - Duplicate Tax Bill
- j. 2026-10 - Indemnification of Township Officials
- k. 2026-11 - Designation of Official for Tax Searches & Liens
- l. 2026-12 - Designation of Public Agency Compliance Officer
- m. 2026-13 - Temporary 2026 Municipal Budget & Water & Sewer Utility Budget
- n. 2026-14 - Legal Holidays for The Year 2026
- o. 2026-15 - Tax Assessor Authorization
- p. 2026-16 - Assessor Rollback Taxes and File Municipal Appeals
- q. 2026-17 - Rate of Interest on Delinquent Water & Sewer Accounts
- r. 2026-18 - Designating Signatures for Depository
- s. 2026-19 - Annual Tax Sale Authorization
- t. 2026-20 - Establishment of Petty Cash Fund and Change Funds
- u. 2026-21 - Statutory Payments of Claims & Other Claims Regular In Nature

Motion by Councilwoman Bonanno, seconded by Councilman Quinoa, carried to approve Resolution # 2026-01 to Resolution # 2026-21 as presented. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilpersons Chamberlin, Fabula, Quinoa, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

**8. RESOLUTIONS – MUNICIPAL APPOINTMENTS**

- a. 2026-22 - Reappointment of Interim Municipal Court Administrator Kayleigh Keggan for One Year Term Expiring December 31, 2026

Motion by Councilwoman Chamberlin, seconded by Councilman Quinoa, and approved on roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilpersons Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

**9. RESOLUTIONS – CONSENT AGENDA – APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSIONALS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2026 (01/01/2026 – 12/31/2026)**

- a. 2026-23 - Municipal Attorney – The Wacks Law Group – Richard Beilin, Esq.
- b. 2026-24 - Personnel/Labor Attorney & Conflict Attorney Eric M. Bernstein & Associates, L.L.C.
- c. 2026-25 - Bond Counsel – Law Offices Gibbons P.C. – John Drakiewicz, Esq.
- d. 2026-26 - Board of Health Official – Warren County Health Department
- e. 2026-27 - Municipal Engineer - French & Parrello Associates  
Christopher Nusser, PE, PP, CME
- f. 2026-28 - Municipal Water & Sewer Utilities Engineer – H2M Associates, Inc.  
Engineer - Stephanie DeCotiis, PE
- g. 2026-29 - Municipal Public Defender – Scott Wilhelm, Esq.  
Alternate Public Defender – Gregory Gianforcaro, Esq.
- h. 2026-30 - Municipal Prosecutor – Michael Hanifan, Esq.  
Alternate Municipal Prosecutor - John Caleca, Esq.
- i. 2026-31 - Municipal Auditor – Nisivoccia LLP – Auditor - Man Lee
- j. 2026-32 - Municipal Planner – Burgis Associates, Inc. – David Novak
- k. 2026-33 - Fund Commissioner(s)
- l. 2026-34 - Risk Management Consultant – Randall W. May
- m. 2026-35 - Health Benefits Consultant
- n. 2026-36 - Information Technology Services - Quikteks

Motion by Councilman Fabula, seconded by Councilwoman Bonanno, carried to approve Resolution # 2026-23 to Resolution # 2026-36 as presented. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilpersons Chamberlin, Fabula, Quinoa, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

**10. APPOINTMENTS TO THE LAND USE BOARD:**

- a. Class II - Emilio Lois – 01/01/2026 - 12/31/2026 (1 Year Term)
- b. Class III - Councilman Edward Fabula - 01/01/2026 - 12/31/2026 (1 Year Term)
- c. Class IV - Charles Zukoski – 01/01/2026 - 12/31/2029 (4 Year Term)
- d. Class IV - Michael DeCarlo – 01/01/2026 - 12/31/2029 (4 Year Term)

- e. Alternate 1 - Hunter Moneta – 01/01/2026 - 12/31/2027 (2 Year Term)
- f. Alternate 2 - Mary Lennon – 01/01/2026 – 12/31/2027 (2 Year Term)
- g. Alternate 3 - Jency Rodriguez - Unexpired Term 01/01/25 to 12/31/26

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Councilwoman Chamberlin, carried to concur with Mayor Tuohy’s appointments to the Land Use Board. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilpersons Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy; **ABSTAIN** – Councilwoman Bonanno on 10 a. only.

**11. APPOINTMENTS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION:**

- a. Fran Gavin – 3 Year Term – 01/01/26 to 12/31/28
- b. Kurt Dericks – 3 Year Term – 01/01/26 to 12/31/28
- c. Cameron Rozell - Alternate 1 – 2 Year Term – 01/01/26 to 12/31/27

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Councilwoman Chamberlin, carried to concur with Mayor Tuohy’s appointments to the Environmental Commission. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilwoman Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

**12. APPOINTMENTS – TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

- a. Emilio Lois – Open Space Director- 1 Year Term – 01/01/26 to 12/31/26
- b. Charles Fineran – 3 Year Term- 01/01/25 to 01/31/27
- c. Mary Lennon – 3 Year Term – 01/01/26 to /31/28
- d. Deborah Bonanno – Council Liaison – 1 Year - 01/01/26 to 12/31/26

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Councilman Fabula, carried to concur with Mayor Tuohy’s appointments to the Trails Advisory Committee. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilwoman Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy; **ABSTAIN** – Councilwoman Bonanno on 12 a.

**13. APPOINTMENTS TO THE RECREATION COMMISSION**

- a. Beverly Meyer - 5 Year Term –01/01/26 to 12/31/30
- b. Ellen Nadeau - 5 Year Term – 01/01/25 to 12/31/29
- c. Bill Barney - 5 Year Term - 01/01/25 to 12/31/29
- d. Nana Asiamah - Appointed to Unexpired 5 Year Term – 01/01/26 to 12/31/28
- e. Robin Nascondiglio - Appointed to Unexpired 5 Year Term - 01/01/26 to 12/31/28

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Councilwoman Bonanno, carried to concur with Mayor Tuohy’s appointment to the Recreation Commission. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilwoman Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

14. **RESOLUTION 2026-37**

Execution of Mediation Agreement Between Allamuchy Township and Fair Share Housing Center Settlement Agreement.

At this time, the meeting was opened to the public.

There were no comments or objections, and the public session was closed.

Attorney Beilin provided a brief synopsis of Resolution 2026-37. He stated that Township was successful in the mediation process as the settlement agreement implements the required affordable housing numbers. Attorney Beilin added that this agreement keeps the Township numbers intact. The Settlement Agreement is on file and available for public inspection at the municipal building.

Attorney Beilin concluded that this agreement is a very good result and the Township is on track for the next phase. There will be some ordinances that will need to be adopted in accordance with the settlement agreement.

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Chamberlin, carried to adopt Resolution 2026-37 as presented and to authorize Mayor Tuohy to execute the settlement agreement. Roll call vote: **AYES** – Councilpersons Chamberlin, Quinoa, Fabula, Bonanno and Mayor Tuohy.

15. **PUBLIC SESSION:**

There were no comments from the public.

16. **ADJOURNMENT – 7:03 P.M.**

Motion by Councilman Quinoa, seconded by Councilman Fabula, carried to adjourn at 7:03 p.m. **AYES** – All in favor; **NAYES** – None; **ABSTAIN** – None; **ABSENT** – None.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Marie Tracy, Municipal Clerk

Rosemary Tuohy, Mayor