



## **BASS RIVER TOWNSHIP**

3 North Maple Avenue - Post Office Box 307

New Gretna, New Jersey 08224

(609) 296-3337

[www.bassriver-nj.org](http://www.bassriver-nj.org)

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### **PLANNING / ZONING BOARD MINUTES FOR RE-ORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 15, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

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#### **CALL TO ORDER / FLAG SALUTE**

The meeting was called to order by **Christopher J. Norman, Esquire** at 7:00 p.m.

#### **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT - “SUNSHINE LAW”**

The Open Public Meeting Act was read by **Christopher J. Norman, Esquire**.

- This meeting of the Bass River Township Planning Board is being held in conformance with the Open Public Meetings Act (“OPMA”), N.J.S.A. 10:4:4-6.
- The notice was published in the Atlantic City Press Newspaper and in The Beacon Newspaper on January 9, 2025.
- This Notice was given to the Municipal Clerk and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and on the Township website.

#### **OATH OF OFFICE - PLANNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP - 40:55D-23**

All Planning Board Members took the Oath of Office.

- Oath of Office - Class I: The mayor or designee, with a one-year term.
- Oath of Office - Class II: A municipal official, usually appointed by the mayor, with a one-year term.
- Oath of Office - Class III: A member of the governing body, with a one-year term.
- Oath of Office - Class IV: Members are citizens of the municipality who are usually appointed by the mayor or council. Four-year term.
- Oath of Office - The Planning Board Members also elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from the Class IV members.
- Oath of Office - Alternate 1
- Oath of Office - Alternate 2
  - Planning Board Members and Alternates cannot participate in any hearing where they have a personal or financial interest.

**OATH OF OFFICE / RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / ROLL CALL**

BOARD MEMBERS	CLASS	TERM EXPIRES	PRESENT	ABSENT
1. William "Rick" Adams	Class 1 - Mayor	12/31/2025	x	
2. Vacant	Class 2 - Employee	12/31/2025		
3. Jane Allen	Class 3 - Commissioner	12/31/2025	x	
4. Cindy Ann Ruffo	Class 4 - Resident - Chair	12/31/2025	x	
5. Robert Neuweiler	Class 4 - Resident - Co-Chair	12/31/2025	x	
6. Richard Steele	Class 4 - Resident	12/31/2025	x	
7. Stacy D. Turlish	Class 4- Resident	12/31/2026	x	
8. James McGettigan	Class 4- Resident	12/31/2026	x	
9. Barbara Dillion	Class 4- Resident	12/31/2027	x	
10. Malinda Fritz	Class 4- Resident	12/31/2027	x	
11. John Ewert	Alt 1 - Resident	12/31/2025	x	
12. Carrie Crowley	Alt 2 - Resident	12/31/2026	x	

**NOMINATION FOR CHAIR**

- Motion to nominate **Chair** approve/oath Cindy Ann Ruffo.
  - Motion: Neuweiler
  - Seconded: Crowley
  - Motion: Carried

BOARD MEMBERS	MOTION	SECOND	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
1. William "Rick" Adams			x			
2. Jane Allen			x			
3. Cindy Ann Ruffo			x			
4. Robert Neuweiler	x		x			
5. Richard Steele			x			
6. Stacy D. Turlish			x			
7. James McGettigan			x			
8. Barbara Dillion			x			
9. Malinda Fritz			x			
10. John Ewert						
11. Carrie Crowley		x				

**NOMINATION FOR VICE CHAIR**

- Motion to nominate **Vice-Chair** approve/oath Robert Neuweiler.
  - Motion: Ruffo
  - Seconded: Adams
  - Motion: Carried

BOARD MEMBERS	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
1. William "Rick" Adams	x			
2. Jane Allen	x			
3. Cindy Ann Ruffo	x			
4. Robert Neuweiler	x			
5. Richard Steele	x			
6. Stacy D. Turlish	x			
7. James McGettigan	x			
8. Barbara Dillion	x			
9. Malinda Fritz	x			
10. John Ewert				
11. Carrie Crowley				

**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR REGARDING BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE**

It is respectfully requested that all Planning Board Members attend the scheduled meetings. It is important to have a quorum which consists of five PB members to conduct business. No hearing may proceed without a qualified quorum of the Board.

**RESOLUTIONS FOR MEMORIALIZATION - CONSENT AGENDA:**

The items listed below are considered routine by the Land Use Planning Board and will be enacted by one motion.

- Resolution 2025- 1                      Appoint Planning Board Attorney
- Resolution 2025- 2                      Appoint Planning Board Engineer
- Resolution 2025- 3                      Appointment of PB Administrator/Recording Secretary
- Resolution 2025- 4                      Designation of Official Newspapers
- Resolution 2025- 5                      Setting Annual PB Meeting Schedule
- Resolution 2025- 6                      OPMA- Public Comment During Planning Board Meetings

A motion was made and seconded to approve the memorialization of Resolutions.

- Motion: Steele
- Seconded: Turlish
- Motion: Carried

BOARD MEMBERS	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
1. William "Rick" Adams	x			
2. Jane Allen	x			
3. Cindy Ann Ruffo	x			
4. Robert Neuweiler	x			
5. Richard Steele	x			
6. Stacy D. Turlish	x			
7. James McGettigan	x			
8. Barbara Dillion	x			
9. Malinda Fritz	x			
10. John Ewert				
11. Carrie Crowley				

**MINUTES SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL**

Minutes for the meeting of: December 18, 2024, taken by Laura Moyer.

Minor correction made to a year from 202 to 2020.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes.

- o Motion: Adams
- o Seconded: Allen
- o Motion: Carried
- o All present voted in favor of the motion.

**APPLICATION(S)**

None

**PRESENTATION**

- Kevin Kowalik, Dealer Principal, Silverton Motors
  - o Block 7, Lot 29 - 5666 Route 9
  - o Block 7, Lot 30 - US 9
- A proposal by Kevin Kowalik, Dealer Principal, Silverton Motors to rehabilitate a property for automotive use was discussed, with concerns about zoning and environmental issues.
- Proposed use: service, auto body, office, apartment, and customer parking.
- It was explained that a preliminary and final major site plan with bulk variance must be filed along with a Certificate of Filing must be obtained by the Pinelands Commission.
- There is a possibility of existing septic and well issues on the property, which would require approval from the Burlington County Health Department.

## **OLD BUSINESS DISCUSSION - CANNABIS REGULATORY**

- Cannabis regulatory issues, mentioning previous discussions on allowing dispensaries.
- There was expressed opposition to retail dispensaries, suggesting instead facilities for agricultural and processing uses.
- It was noted that distribution is already permitted in the state.
- There are different classes of cannabis use: cultivation, manufacturing, wholesale, transportation, retail, and delivery.
- There is a potential need for an ordinance to limit the number of cannabis grow facilities in the township.
- It was suggested keeping the number of grow facilities at two for now, to see how it works before considering more.
- There is a potential impact of allowing more grow facilities, including traffic and environmental concerns.
- It was advised that the process for preparing and filing an ordinance to limit the number of grow facilities.

## **STATE OF NEW JERSEY CANNABIS REGULATORY COMMISSION**

<https://www.nj.gov/cannabis/businesses/>

Class 1 – New Jersey Class 1 Cannabis Cultivator License  
Grow recreational use cannabis.

Class 2 – New Jersey Class 2 Cannabis Manufacturer License  
Produce recreational use cannabis.

Class 3 – New Jersey Class 3 Cannabis Wholesale License  
Store, sell or otherwise transfer, recreational use cannabis items between cannabis cultivators, wholesalers, or retailers.

Class 4 – New Jersey Class 4 Cannabis Distributor License  
Transport cannabis items in bulk between cannabis cultivators, manufacturers, or retailers within the state of New Jersey.

Class 5 – New Jersey Class 5 Retail License  
Purchase recreational use cannabis from licensed cultivators, manufacturers, or wholesalers and sell those items to consumers in a retail store.

Class 6 – New Jersey Class 6 Delivery License  
Transport a consumer's purchases of recreational use cannabis and related supplies from the retailer to that consumer.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY - 3 MINUTES**

- **Reminder:** Kindly stand up and speak with a strong, clear voice.
- **Reminder:** Planning Board meetings are regarding Municipal Land Use matters only.

A motion was made and seconded to **open** the meeting to the public.

- Motion: Neuweiler
  - Seconded: Adams
  - Motion: Carried
  - All present voted in favor of the motion.
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- John M. - Bass River Township Resident
    - Asked for clarification on the minimum/maximum amount of land needed for the cannabis.
  - C. Bitzberger - Bass River Township Resident
    - Asked for clarification on the dispensary information. Is against the retail.
  - Pam H. - Bass River Township Resident
    - Asked if anyone has performed research on problems regarding the cannabis retail stores.
  - Katherine P. - Bass River Township Resident
    - Asked for clarification of Class 3 Cannabis.

A motion was made and seconded to **close** the meeting to the public.

- Motion: Steele
- Seconded: Adams
- Motion: Carried
- All present voted in favor of the motion.

**NEW BUSINESS BOARD DISCUSSION - AFFORDABLE HOUSING OBLIGATION**

- Concerns were raised about the township's obligation to provide 30 units of affordable housing, noting the lack of public water and sewer infrastructure.
- It was suggested filing an appeal to negotiate a more reasonable number with the state.
- Members were advised on the process for accepting or appealing the affordable housing number, including the need for a resolution from the governing body.
- There was emphasis for the importance of acting now to avoid being stuck with the 30-unit requirement for 10 years.
- The board agreed to discuss the issue further and consider filing an appeal and to consult with the township attorney and affordable housing council.

**Opened to the public – No comments from the public.**

**ADJOURNMENT** Time: \_\_\_\_\_ 8:00 \_\_\_\_\_ p.m.

A motion was made and seconded to **close** the meeting to the public.

- All present voted in favor of the motion.

**PUBLIC NOTICE** Next scheduled meeting is: February 19, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Natalie Lewis*

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Natalie Lewis

Land Use Board Administrator/Secretary

#### **REMINDER FOR AGENDA ITEMS AND PLANNING BOARD APPLICATIONS**

If you want to add a topic to the meeting agenda, you must send an email to the Planning Board Administrator / Recording Secretary with the details you wish to discuss. This ensures the Board Members are aware of the topic before the meeting takes place.

- **Contact Information:** The Planning Board Administrator / Recording Secretary is the person responsible for compiling the agenda. Natalie Lewis - [nlewis@bassriver-nj.org](mailto:nlewis@bassriver-nj.org)
- **Communication method:** Submit your agenda item by email to:
  - Natalie Lewis - [nlewis@bassriver-nj.org](mailto:nlewis@bassriver-nj.org) - (609) 296-3337 - leave a message.
- **Deadline for submission:** You must submit the agenda item in writing by 4:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month.
- **Vital details:** In your email, include a clear description of the topic, any relevant background information, and who will present your topic item.



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**2025 NOTICE OF MEETINGS DATES FOR  
 BASS RIVER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD**

Date: January 2, 2025

To: Atlantic City Press [classlegal@pressofac.com](mailto:classlegal@pressofac.com)  
 Times-Beacon – Bass River-New Gretna [applegals@gannett.com](mailto:applegals@gannett.com)

From: Natalie Lewis [nlewis@bassriver-nj.org](mailto:nlewis@bassriver-nj.org)  
 Planning Board Administrator/Planning Board Recording Clerk

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of annual scheduled Planning Board meetings will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month.

Meetings will take place at: Bass River Township Municipal Building  
 3 North Maple Avenue, Bass River Township  
 New Gretna, New Jersey 08224

January	15	May	21	September	17
February	19	June	18	October	15
March	19	July	16	November	19
April	16	August	20	December	17

The next Planning Board Re-organization meeting shall be Wednesday, January 21, 2026, beginning promptly at 7:00 p.m. prevailing time with credentials being posted on the Bass River Township website.

Please take note that legal action may be taken during all Planning Board meetings.

Natalie Lewis  
 Planning Board Administrator/Planning Board Recording Clerk  
[nlewis@bassriver-nj.org](mailto:nlewis@bassriver-nj.org)