

Atlantic City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall with Mayor Grace Garrett presiding. Council members present were Emily Kennedy (Ward 1), Jim Behrens (Ward 2), Mike McDermott (Ward 3), Jeremy Butler (At-Large), and Elaine Otte (At-Large). Shawn Sarsfield (Ward 4) attended via telephone. Absent: Dana Halder (Ward 5). Also present: City Administrator John Lund.

Motion by Behrens; second by McDermott to approve agenda. All ayes. Motion passed. Council recited the Pledge.

Motion by Butler; second by Otte to approve consent agenda:

- Minutes of December 3, 2025, City Council Meeting.
- Class E Retail Alcohol (LE) License & Ownership Update: Casey's #2365; Casey's #3035.
- Class C Retail Alcohol (LC) License & Ownership Update – Rumors Lounge.
- Class E Retail Alcohol (LE) License – Olsen's BP.
- Bills: \$310,120.79.

All ayes: motion passed.

Public Forum & Requested Hearings. There were no speakers.

Motion by Kennedy; second by McDermott to approve RESOLUTION #72-25 "APPROVAL OF THE CY 2026 BUDGET FOR ATLANTIC MUNICIPAL UTILITIES." Roll call vote: unanimous.

Annual Presentation by Director Michelle Andersen on the Atlantic Public Library.

Theme for this year's report: What is the value of the library?

In 2025, there were over 47K physical checkouts, about half of those children's materials. There were 42K in-person visitors and 11K unique website visits.

The City provides 64.7% of the library's budget; staff costs are nearly 70% of total expenses. Andersen said their annual budget last year was \$476,833 outside of capital expenditures. The City has helped every time there has been a capital need; Andersen noted that many libraries don't receive this kind of support from their cities. This year, the Carnegie Foundation provided a \$10K no-application grant to every active Carnegie Library.

Presentation from Kelsey Beschorner, Kolton Hewlett, and Ciara Hoegh on Produce in the Park.

Hoegh, the Market Manager, explained that Produce in the Park began as part of the Chamber of Commerce in 2012, and is now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with its own board that has two missions: to promote local food and to build a community that supports health and well being through sponsoring multiple markets each year.

Hoegh said they have over 30 vendors and 300 visitors each time. Their new goal is to have fresh produce available year-round. They are also seeking new sponsors for live local musicians. Vendors fund the Manager's salary; sponsors fund everything else offered by the markets.

Presentation from Sue Mosier and Deb Lamb, Meals on Wheels.

Meals on Wheels provides boxed hot meals five days/week delivered by volunteer drivers to those in need. These drivers are often the only person who checks on these people each day. Around 40 houses receive a meal every day. Since 2018, Heritage House has prepared the meals. Clients pay \$3.50 per meal while the full cost is @\$4.15, with donations subsidizing the remainder. This contract will end on 6/26/26 and prices will increase. If Heritage House changes its meal preparation procedure, prices could rise to around @\$8.00.

Meals on Wheels is governed by a nine-member volunteer Board of Directors serving three-year terms. The County provides \$7800/year, the City \$7500/year since the beginning. Operating expenses have not increased, but if the meal cost goes up, the subsidizing of the meals will have to end, reducing affordability for clients.

They always need drivers and appreciate donations.

Motion by McDermott; second by Butler to approve RESOLUTION #74-25 "AUTHORIZING THE USE OF A PRELIMINARY OFFICIAL STATEMENT FOR THE SALE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION CORPORATE PURPOSE REFUNDING BONDS, SERIES 2026." Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Administrator's Report. Lund said he will be out of the office from December 19-29. He expects the legislature to pass tax reform at the beginning of the session in January. Council Budget Workshop will be held on January 14, 2026, at 5:00 pm.

Mayor's Report.

- Bull Creek Remediation: She spoke at the school board meeting last week asking for a partnership in the Bull Creek committee, with the first step to build a detention pond on school property.
- New law 1/1/26 for Hands Free Driving. Penalty @\$170.
- The Mayor said that while elected officials don't ever feel they accomplished all they wished, as of her last council meeting, it has been her pleasure to serve.

The Mayor administered the oath of office to Second Ward Councilman Jim Behrens; At-Large Councilman Jeremy Butler; and incoming Mayor Robert L Clausen, Jr.

City Council Reports.

Butler: Cemetery Board. Tiny budget, big accomplishments. Beginning digitizing process.

Otte: P&Z: comp plan; strategic plan is next. CADCO. Clerk position is open until filled, but interviews have begun.

Sarsfield: Airport Commission: fuel sales down this month. Sidewalks.

McDermott: Tour of Coke plant. Library Board. Sidewalks: 10 this year, 7 lined up for spring 2026, slots for 8 more.

Homeowners can pick up applications at City Hall. Planning a fix for the downtown brickwork.

Behrens: Sidewalks. Cancer presentation put on by hospital.

Kennedy: AMU: Following an all-year project to work on leaks, they are now losing 2.5% to leakage (average is 10%). Jody Lorence retired as president of their Board.

Outgoing Mayor Garrett read a letter from a Wyoming couple that were shown great hospitality in Atlantic in 1974.

The next City Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 7th, 2026.

Motion by Behrens; second by Butler to adjourn at 6:34 pm. All ayes. Motion passed.

Grace N. Garrett, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Laura McLean, City Clerk