

The September 8, 2026 Regular Session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Spring Lake Heights, Monmouth County, New Jersey was called to order by Mayor Campion at 7:00 p.m. in the Frank E. Adams Municipal Building with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Councilman John Casagrande
Councilwoman Michele Degnan-Spang
Councilman William Graetz
Councilwoman Sara King
Councilman Dayton Lonsdale
Mayor Christopher Campion

Absent:

Councilman Leonard Capristo

Also attending:

John Barrett, Borough Administrator
Suzanne Cevasco, Borough Attorney
Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk
Joseph May, Borough Engineer and Public Works Director

Mayor Campion announced: Pursuant to the requirements of New Jersey's Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was included in the Annual Meeting Notice filed in the Office of the Borough Clerk; posted on the Borough website and in the Municipal Building; published as a legal notice in the Coast Star newspaper; and mailed to those requesting notice and providing payment. Take Notice that pursuant to P.L. 2025, c. 72, the complete text of each legal notice of the Borough of Spring Lake Heights, County of Monmouth, including the Boards, Commissions and the like may be obtained or viewed by the public on our official Internet Website: <https://springlakehts.com/public-notices>. Take further notice, that New Jersey Secretary of State legal notice webpage of each entity is <https://www.nj.gov/state/statewide-legal-notices-list.shtml>

AMEND AGENDA

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the agenda was amended to add Ordinance No. 2026-14 and a presentation on the water tower rehabilitation project by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

APPROVE AMENDED AGENDA

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the amended agenda was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

APPROVE MINUTES - August 17, 2026

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mrs. Degnan-Spang, the August 17, 2026, minutes were approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: Mr. Graetz Absent: Mr. Capristo

PRESENTATIONS

- **R2026-167**, Appoint a probationary patrolman - Anthony Barthel

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mrs. King, Resolution No. R2026-167 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-168**, Appoint a probationary patrolman - Matthew Rossi

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, Resolution No. R2026-168 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

Chief Ed Gunnell introduced the two new probationary officers; highlighting their training at the Ocean County Police Academy and prior experience in neighboring beach communities.

Judge Quinn swore in Officer Anthony Barthel and Officer Matthew Rossi. Mayor Campion congratulated the new officers, their families, and expressed gratitude to the police force.

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the meeting was paused for 10 minutes by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **Water Tower Rehabilitation & Cell Tower Project**

Declan O'Scanlon, wireless telecommunications infrastructure consultant, explained his history and how he began in the industry. Mr. O'Scanlon explained how Spring Lake Heights needed to remove the communication equipment from the water tower to allow for rehabilitation of the water tower and move the communication equipment to specified cell tower. Mr. Michael Rubino disrupted the meeting from the audience. Mayor Campion stated Mr. Rubino could speak after the presentation by Mr. O'Scanlon. Mr. O'Scanlon continued with his presentation explaining how and why the communication tower is important. Mayor Campion asked the Council to allow for a public comment time to allow residents to ask questions of the professionals and voice opinions.

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the public comment section regarding the cell tower project was opened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

Brian Stys, 535 Old Mill Road, raised technical and procedural objections based on his own professional background and research into the project. Mr. Stys stated the permit was improperly filed as a "rehabilitation" rather than a "major commercial structure" or new building. He detailed clerical issues he found including construction site infractions, unpermitted actions like tree removal, and safety issues as well as issues with contractors doing work outside of permitted hours. Mr. Stys urged the Council to issue an immediate stop-work order. Mayor Campion asked Mr. O'Scanlon to clarify who filed permits. Mr. O'Scanlon stated that AT&T won the bid and is the spearhead of the project. AT&T did the permits, drawings, and interaction with the Construction department.

Michael Rubino, 543 Old Mill Road, inquired what topics could be addressed during this public comment section. Mr. Casagrande clarified that the topic is the cell tower/water tower projects and other topics would be addressed at a later time.

Blair Ollendorf, 533 Old Mill Road, expressed his concern for his family and property's safety regarding the proximity of the tower to his home and his new baby's nursery room. He also voiced apprehensions over property devaluation, visual nuisance, and future unstudied technology expansion. He thanked the Council for their time and attention. Mr. O'Scanlon answered Mr. Ollendorf's question regarding technology expansions, and he believes companies will be moving more towards satellite technology, and the current technology and upgrades will support for the foreseeable future.

Dana Kane, 535 Old Mill Road, inquired why the tower was situated on the northern edge of the parcel near homes rather than in the center of the lot to reduce fall zone risks to adjacent properties. She also emphasized the importance of the concrete inspection and how it created a significant safety risk and liability to the Borough.

John Beyers, 537 Old Mill Road, conveyed his concern regarding the location of the cell tower and why it is located so close to the houses. Engineer Joseph May explained the water plant infrastructure and pipes underground run south from the water tower to the water plant and beyond. The location was selected due to access requirements for heavy construction equipment that constrained the south and center sections, leaving only the northern portion open.

Shane Clark, 1808 Beverly Avenue, raised concerns over Radio Frequency electromagnetic exposure and biological impact near residences and water infrastructure. Mr. Clark asked the Council for baseline radio frequency readings, monitoring, baseline water quality testing, and verification of zoning compliance. He also asked who the ultimate liability would fall on if health, environmental, or structural issues should arise. Mr. Clark

requested the objections he raised be entered into the public record. Mr. O'Scanlon responded that the equipment moving from the water tower to the cell tower is the same equipment. Equipment changes may be made but the equipment would not be changing frequency drastically or going beyond the FCC allowable levels.

Brian Stys, 535 Old Mill Road, expressed his discontentment with the site selection based on protecting the water system and stated measures could have been taken to choose a different location away from homes.

Michael Rubino, 543 Old Mill Road, detailed the history and high property values of residential homes along Old Mill Road. He criticized the permit submitted by AT&T with no survey and cited Borough ordinance violations. Mr. Rubino emphasized that borough code limits tower heights to 100 feet, the proposed tower is 160–165 feet and mandates a fall zone radius equal to 120% of the tower height. He also highlighted that the tower sits approximately 60–70 feet from residential property lines and homes and falls within range of Old Mill Road and municipal infrastructure. He stated the commercial lease should have required a conditional use permit or use variance rather than a lack lather permit.

Borough Attorney, Suzanne Cevasco, clarified that municipal property is statutorily exempt from local zoning ordinances and that the project underwent a properly noticed review before the Land Use Board.

Brian Stys, 535 Old Mill Road, asked for clarification regarding the land lease of the cell tower. Attorney Ms. Cevasco responded that the land is still owned by the Borough.

Mr. O'Scanlon spoke about the applications and permits filed with the construction department and working with them to get answers. Mayor Campion stated he would like the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to do an audit of the Spring Lake Construction Department. He would like to clarify is qualifications are met to issue permits and due diligence is properly completed.

Jarrod Lackemacher, 909/819 Park Avenue, expressed concern over height, lack of notice/transparency, and potential impacts on flight plans in Wall Township. The tower is 40 feet below the FAA regulated height. Mr. Lackemacher questioned how lease revenue is allocated and requested coverage maps comparing current signal coverage versus proposed height benefits.

Blair Ollendorf, 533 Old Mill Road, referenced a 1995 appellate court ruling regarding the same water tower, asserting that commercial carriers leasing municipal land must comply with local municipal zoning ordinances. Borough Attorney Cevasco responded that she will investigate the case brought to attention.

Kerry Murray, 710 Shore Road, questioned why the project was processed as a "courtesy review" without a formal application, checklist, or site drawings during the November 2025 Land Use Board meeting. Ms. Murray noted that the November 2025 Land Use Board meeting minutes were missing from the borough website. Borough Clerk Gillis responded that this was a simple oversight and not intentional. Ms. Murray continued questions and cited Ordinance 22-652.12, asserting that municipal exemptions require borough council approval via resolution following a formal review by the borough engineer. Mayor Campion responded that the Borough professionals and attorneys will be consulted and clarified on the topic.

Elizabeth Cross, 1210 Tuxedo Place, criticized the lack of transparency, public notice, and coordination, noting the proliferation of cell towers across neighboring municipalities. Ms. Cross questioned Mr. O'Scanlon and his credentials and Mr. O'Scanlon thoroughly answered Ms. Cross' questions. Ms. Cross also inquired about the financial terms of the AT&T contract and requested all project documents be published online.

Debra Mercora, 813 Jersey Avenue, inquired whether lease terms prevent AT&T from adding additional towers or structures on the parcel in the future. Mayor Campion responded that the lease agreement has not changed and this is strictly to move the equipment off the water tower, not to change the lease.

Michael Rubino, 543 Old Mill Road, stated the Borough rights are not unlimited; that case law needs to be considered when the Borough is not being controlled by their own ordinances. Ms. Cevasco agreed that Mr. Rubino is correct in that statement.

Jarrod Lackemacher, 909/819 Park Avenue, requested to see coverage expansion by changing the height of the cellular equipment.

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mrs. King, the public comment section regarding the cell tower project was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

Mayor Campion ordered that all construction work on the cell tower be suspended pending further investigation and review at the next meeting on September 21st. He also directed Borough staff to contact the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to review the building department files and audit the permit issuance process.

DISCUSSION ITEMS – None

MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Lonsdale – No report

Councilwoman Degnan-Spang – Mrs. Degnan-Spang reported that hydrant flushing begins on September 14th and there are overnight lane closures on Highway 71 on September 9th and 10th.

Councilman Graetz – Mr. Graetz reminded drivers that school is back in session and keep an eye out for children, pedestrians and crossing guards.

Councilwoman King – Mrs. King provided information about the September 11 25th anniversary ceremony the Borough was holding. She also reminded that the Veterans Luncheon planning is beginning and to mark calendars for Veterans Day for resident veterans. Mrs. King mentioned the ordinance on the agenda regarding zoning regulations. Borough Clerk Gillis corrected the record that the ordinance title should be article six, not article four. The Borough attorney agreed this is a de minimis change.

Councilman Casagrande – Mr. Casagrande reported recreation updated for Councilman Capristo. He explained the pickleball open league extension. He also brought to attention the Fall Arts & Crafts Program as well as the Fall Festival on October 24th. He concluded by mentioning the salary and wage ordinance.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Any Item)

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, the public comment section was opened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

Christine Nevin-Meloro, Environmental Commission, inquired about the Borough's energy plan and how the commission can work with the Borough to accomplish initiatives in the plan.

Richard Thurman, Environmental Commission, inquired on the status of the Maclearie Memorial Tree. Clerk Gillis responded that the Borough is working on getting quotes from vendors for the various tree types and sizes.

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Casagrande the public comment section was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARING

- **Ordinance No. 2026-12** Ordinance Establishing Salaries and Wages for the year 2026

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mrs. King, the public comment section for ordinance 2026-12 was opened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

None presented

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, the public comment section was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: Mr. Capristo

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mrs. King, Ordinance 2026-12 was approved as amended by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **Ordinance No. 2026-13** Ordinance Authorizing extinguishment of easement over Block 24 Lot 27, commonly known as 555 Old Mill Rd and authorizing related actions

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mrs. King, the public comment section for ordinance 2026-13 was opened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

None presented

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. King, the public comment section was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, Ordinance 2026-13 was approved as amended by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS

- **Ordinance No. 2026-14**, Amending Article VI Titled “Zoning Regulations”

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Graetz, Ordinance 2026-14 was introduced by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

The scheduled public hearing will be Monday October 5, 2026.

REPORTS, NOTICES & CORRESPONDENCE

- Spring Lake Heights Zoning Violation Monthly Report – June 2026
- Spring Lake Heights Police Monthly Report – June 2026
- JCP&L Public Notice of Hearing September 9, 2026, Re: Approval of rate increase
- Township of Wall Public Hearing on September 22, 2026, Re: Ord. 22-2026 Amending Section 140-56 Administrative Fees

CONSENT AGENDA Resolutions R2026-170 to R2026-171

Consent Agenda items are considered routine and will be enacted with a single motion; any items requiring expenditure are supported by a Certification of Availability of Funds; any item requiring discussion will be removed from the Consent Agenda; all Consent Agenda items will be reflected in full in the minutes.

- **R2026-170**, Approving the issuance of an Alcoholic Beverage Control Social Affair Permit -Independent Fire Co #1

- **R2026-171**, Authorizing the release of the designated performance bond – Fairway Mews Community Assoc.

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mrs. Degnan-Spang, the consent agenda was approved at the meeting by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

RESOLUTIONS

- **R2026-169**, Confirming the appointment of a school crossing guards

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, Resolution No. R2026-169 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: Mr. Graetz

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-172**, Authorizing 2026 salaries for designated employees

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, Resolution No. R2026-172 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-173**, Awarding a contract to Whirl Construction in the amount of \$26,480.00

On a motion by Mrs. Degnan-Spang, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, Resolution No. R2026-173 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-174**, Awarding a contract to Whirl Construction in the amount of \$28,000.00

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, Resolution No. R2026-174 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-175**, Authorizing payment and acceptance of maintenance bond - Whirl Corporation, Inc.

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, Resolution No. R2026-175 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-176**, Authorizing payment and acceptance of maintenance bond – Fernandes Construction, Inc.

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, Resolution No. R2026-176 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-177**, Authorizing a contract for purchase of 2026 Caterpillar Backhoe via Sourcewell Co-Op Pricing System

On a motion by Mr. Lonsdale, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, Resolution No. R2026-177 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Capristo

- **R2026-178**, Approving the payment of claims on the September 3, 2026 bills list

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, Resolution No. R2026-178 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Casagrande, Mr. Capristo, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

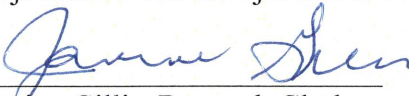
Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Mr. Graetz

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the meeting was adjourned without objection at 9:00 p.m.


Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk

Approved: October 19, 2026