



FINANCE AND CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 4, 2025 - 10:00 AM

Hybrid Meeting: In-person/Virtual Zoom meeting

Call to Order and Roll Call

Councilman Schnall
Councilman Brown — Absent
Councilwoman Greenberg- Absent
Julie Doran, Village Administrator
Ellen Malgieri, Tax Assessor
Irma Weir, Tax Collector
Chris Battaglia, Village CFO
Greg Bock, Village Treasurer
Howard Levison, Water Administrator
Joycelyn White, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes

October 15, 2025

The October 15, 2025 minutes will be sent via email for approval.

New Business

FY'26 Operating & Capital Budget

- **Schedule:** <https://www.southorange.org/156/Budget-Financial-Documents>
- Administrator Doran outlined the full budget timeline.
- Capital requests have been received; discussions are underway.
- Year-end transfers will appear on Monday's Council agenda.
- Departments will begin entering operating budget requests next week.
- Department budget presentations:



- **January 31, 2026** (first session)
- **February 7, 2026** (second session)
- Outside organizations will present in February.
- Budget introduction is expected in March/April, depending on completion of financial statements and state budget notices.
- The goal remains to adopt the budget by early May.

Councilman Schnall provided remarks to the incoming council member regarding budget responsibilities, financial levers (tax rate, services, capital planning), debt strategy, and fund balance considerations.

Old Business

Open Space Trust Fund

The committee discussed:

- The referendum passed by a strong margin.
- A revised Open Space Trust Fund Advisory Committee will be formed after the reorganization meeting.
- The Township will collect revenue in 2026; expanded project funding will begin the following year.

Water Discussion Update

- Staff are finalizing the transition and closeout of the South Orange Water Utility.
- NJ American Water is completing its final billing service reporting; pending receivables will determine internal reconciliation steps.
- A lead line identification and replacement project will begin shortly and affect every property.
- Water utility debt defeasance is underway:
 - Securities priced; closing documents expected within two weeks.



- Approximately \$2.2M reimbursement will return to the Township for previously un-borrowed expenses.
- The remaining utility will stay open until all receivables/expenses are cleared.
- NJ American Water will attend quarterly Public Works meetings to report on capital investments.

Department Update

Finance Department

- **Year-end transfers**
- **Purchase Orders and Closeout**
- **Civic Plus Accounting for 2026**
- Year-end reconciliation and transfers are underway.
- No unusual variances; operations are within expected norms.
- Discussions were held regarding CivicPlus accounting structure and centralizing contract tracking for improved reporting.

Tax Collector

- Tax collections: nearly 99% for taxes and 98% for PILOTs.
- Preparing year-end reports.
- A new tax software system goes live January 1; data migration is in progress.
- Coordination with the Assessor and water account uploads will occur prior to launch.

Tax Assessor

Tax Assesor

- Ratio appeal submitted; awaiting state response.
- Added assessments and changes for 2026 will close out by January 10.
- No new PILOT developments are pending.
- Seton Hall payments were received; the revenue recalculation model is under review.



Water Administrator

- Continuing closeout coordination.
- NJ American Water sent notices regarding delayed billing; residents with questions are being referred directly to NJAW.
- Additional discussion will occur in the follow-up meeting immediately after this session.

Public Comments

The Chair opens the meeting for public comments.

Ed Moore, South Orange Resident, raised concerns about community communication regarding engineering projects, referencing experiences with bike lanes, repaving, and traffic-calming. He emphasized the need for clearer public updates.

Committee members acknowledged the concern and agreed communication should continue to improve.

Next Meeting Date

TBD, 2026 Quarterly Meeting Schedule

The committee decided to continue meeting quarterly in 2026. Meeting dates will be posted on the Village website calendar.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:00am
Respectfully submitted by Joycelyn White