

**BOROUGH OF TUCKERTON PRIDE &  
CELEBRATION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES: Wednesday – February 25,  
2026**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Marshall at 7:00 PM. The Open Public Meeting Act statement was read by the Secretary. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Marshall.

**REORGANIZATION/ SWEARING IN:**

Mayor Marshall swore in Brian Martin and Barbara Baumann to the Tuckerton Pride and Celebration Commission

Ms. Gioiello nominated, seconded by Ms. Baumann that Brian Martin be the chairperson for the Pride and Celebration Committee for the year 2026. It was so moved.

Ms. Baumann nominated, seconded by Mr. Brian Martin that Renee Gioiello be the vice chairperson for the Pride and Celebration Committee for the year 2026. It was so moved.

**ATTENDANCE:**

<b>Barbara Baumann</b>	<b>Renee Gioiello</b>	<b>Brian Martin</b>	<b>Wayne Martin</b>	<b>Nancy Peterson</b>
Present	Present	Present	Absent	Present

**Approval of November 24, 2025 meeting minutes.**

Ms. Gioiello made a motion to approve the November 24, 2025 minutes; the motion was second by Ms. Peterson. It was so moved.

**Old Business:**

Chair Martin reported that the event was well received overall. The horse and carriage was not present this year, as the horse had passed away and the owner was not yet comfortable with the replacement animal. Patrons were universally understanding once the situation was explained, and there is hope the carriage will return next year.

Bell ringing was handled by the Methodist Church on their side of the event. For the Pride and Celebration side, Chair Martin, along with volunteers, rang the bell and concluded around 4:00 PM when activity shifted toward the church and the tree lighting.

The tree lighting was the strongest-attended element of the day, with an estimated 300 or more attendees — the largest crowd ever recorded for a Tuckerton tree lighting. The Tuckerton Police Department facilitated pedestrian safety by stopping traffic, and the Parkertown Fire Department provided a ladder truck with a spotlight. Michael Corliss performed, followed by Dickens characters who sang three songs for the crowd. The stage lift, countdown, and light activation were all well-coordinated.

Daytime attendance was lighter by comparison. Several members noted that the Tuckerton Emporium had fewer independent vendors and less variety than in prior years, with a heavier emphasis on witchy and Wiccan merchandise and fewer traditional Christmas items. The committee acknowledged this is outside their control. The Emporium owner, Charlie, reported that his sales were strong — he was still serving customers at the close of the event — and he again generously lent his chair for the Santa Claus display.

Members discussed ideas for next year's event. Ms. Gioiello proposed exploring a portable synthetic ice skating rink, which requires no actual ice, can accommodate approximately 50 skaters at a time, and could be operated by a private vendor who charges admission. Because Pride and Celebration cannot charge for services, a potential arrangement through the Chamber of Commerce was discussed, whereby the Chamber could fund the rink and collect fees independently.

A traveling winter carousel was also proposed on the same model — a vendor who sets up and charges attendees directly. Additionally, members discussed creating a visual focal point on the county-owned property near the main intersection. Ideas included a large decorative banner or seasonal display. It was noted that the parade sleigh remains at Paradise Cove, where it is maintained and cared for by the association there. County liability rules and sightline restrictions at the Route 9 intersection limit what can be placed in that area. Chair Martin noted that next year's concert sign will be positioned a few additional feet back from the intersection per a county request received this year.

Ms. Gioiello will research skating rink and carousel vendors and bring pricing information to the next meeting to allow sufficient planning lead time.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Summer Concerts — Band Bookings and Budget**

Ms. Baumann reported on summer concert bookings. Five Friday-night concerts are confirmed for July and August 2026. Dates and approved fees are as follows: July 10 — Stranger Things (\$500); July 17 — Rave on (\$700); July 24 — Later Dazes Blues Band (\$500); August 7 — Go Rock Yourself (\$600); August 14 — Joey D & Johnny B's Rockin' Oldies (\$400). The total authorized concert budget is \$2,700.

The committee discussed a previously planned sixth concert on August 21 featuring Mel Santos. After deliberation, the committee voted to reduce the series to five concerts, removing the August 21 date. The decision was based on budget constraints and uncertainty about crowd draw following last year's weather cancellation, during which the event had to be called off before it could fully take place. Ms. Baumann will notify Mel Santos that the slot has been eliminated, noting that the committee simply voted to hold five concerts this season.

For a potential sixth community event on that date, the committee discussed lower-cost alternatives such as an open mic night featuring local or Porch Fest musicians, or a community comedy night. These ideas will be explored further as the season approaches.

Chair Martin will apply for the \$1,000 county grant for concerts, reducing the net cost to \$1,700.

Last year's sponsors — Doyle's (\$500), Stewart's (\$500), and the Seegers Group (\$500) — contributed \$1,500 in total. Chair Martin confirmed the Seegers Group will again sponsor a band this year, and additional sponsors will be solicited.

Motion to authorize Ms. Baumann to hire the five bands and to authorize spending of \$2,700 for summer concerts: made by Chair Martin, seconded by Ms. Gioiello. All in favor.

<b>Band</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approved Fee</b>
Stranger Things	July 10	\$500
Rave on	July 17	\$700
Later Dazes Blues	July 24	\$500
Go Rock Yourself	August 7	\$600
Joey D & Johnny B's Rockin' Oldies	August 14	\$400
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$2,700</b>

## **2. Easter — April 5, 2026**

Easter falls very early this year (April 5), making an independent outdoor egg hunt at the ball field inadvisable due to the risk of cold or muddy conditions. Chair Martin reported that Marianne Riley of the Tuckerton Methodist Church had reached out through Mr. Wayne Martin asking whether Pride and Celebration would like to participate in the church's community Easter egg hunt. The committee discussed the proposal and agreed that the most practical form of participation would be for Pride and Celebration to supply candy for the church to stuff into Easter eggs, supporting the community event without hosting a separate one. Chair Martin confirmed he will contact Marianne Riley to confirm the arrangement, noting that Mr. Wayne Martin had already informed her the committee needed to meet before committing. A specific dollar amount was not voted on at this meeting; Chair Martin will obtain details and bring a budget figure to the next meeting for approval.

## **3. Arbor Day — April 24, 2026**

Arbor Day is scheduled for Friday, April 24, 2026. Committee will contact Ann Lupo at Tuckerton Elementary School regarding the tree dedication and student writing ceremony. The question of this year's honoree was discussed. The honoree is traditionally someone who has dedicated significant time to the betterment of the borough and the community. Names raised included Doris, a longtime community supporter who attends nearly every council meeting and

community event, and Russ and Mary Lou Mathis, longtime church volunteers who were described as very active in the community during their prime years of service. No final decision was made. The committee will make a final decision at the March meeting, leaving approximately one month to prepare.

#### **4. Town-Wide Yard Sale — June 6, 2026**

Based on last year's successful date of June 7, the committee agreed to hold the town-wide yard sale on Saturday, June 6, 2026, keeping to the first Saturday in June.

#### **5. Halloween**

Ms. Peterson indicated she is not in favor of holding a Halloween event this year. No action was taken. The matter may be revisited at a future meeting if interest arises.

#### **6. Ye Olde Christmas 2026**

Ye Olde Christmas 2026 will be held on the first Saturday in December, which falls on December 5, 2026.

#### **7. USA 250th Anniversary — Revolution NJ Program**

Tuckerton has officially joined the statewide Revolution NJ program commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States. The Pride and Celebration Committee has been designated as the lead municipal committee for Tuckerton's participation. Chair Martin expressed strong interest in making the town look festive and patriotic for the occasion.

His primary idea is to line Route 9 telephone poles with American flags, potentially including historical flags such as the 13 Colonies flag to add visual variety and historical context as visitors travel through town. Public Works may be able to assist with installation using their bucket truck, in the same manner used for Christmas lights. If not, Chair Martin indicated he would undertake the installation himself. The flags would ideally be in place by the 4th of July parade and fireworks, and the fireworks committee may be willing to contribute funding toward flags and decorations, as this aligns with their mission area.

Chair Martin will contact Phil Hart and review the RevNJ.org resources to identify available state funding, flag supplies, and programming opportunities. Given ordering lead times, the committee aims to have flag orders confirmed by the March meeting.

#### **8. Chamber of Commerce Collaboration**

Chair Martin stated his intention to attend the next Chamber of Commerce meeting and will invite a Chamber representative to attend the next Pride and Celebration meeting to explore opportunities for joint event planning and coordination.

#### **Members Forum:**

Chair Martin provided a brief informational update on recent meetings with the Tuckerton

Seaport board. The Seaport has requested municipal support — including utility bill relief and plowing assistance — and has expressed interest in re-engaging with Pride and Celebration for future events. Chair Martin attended a January meeting with Seaport board members and made clear that the town's support must be matched by renewed community programming from the Seaport, which has not held events in several years. He advocated for a community advisory committee at the Seaport that would include representatives from the Tuckerton Beach Association, the Paradise Cove and Uplanders Association, and the Town Council. The Seaport board responded positively to the concept. Ms. Peterson expressed willingness to serve on such a committee. The Pride and Celebration Committee agreed not to commit to any Seaport events at this time, pending further development from the Seaport's side.

**Public Forum:**

Calvin Morrie suggested reaching out to community organizations — such as the American Legion, VFW, and Red Men — to explore costumed or living history representation, drawing on the precedent of the 1976 Bicentennial, during which historical figures were portrayed at public events. The committee responded positively to this idea. It was also noted that both the American Legion and the VFW will serve as co-Grand Marshals in this year's 4th of July parade, rather than alternating as in prior years.

**Approval of Secretary Services.**

MOTION	SECOND	NAME	YEAS	NAYS	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
		Barbara Baumann	X			
X		Renee Gioiello	X			
		Brian Martin	X			
		Wayne Martin				X
	X	Nancy Peterson	X			

**Adjournment** – Chairman at 8:14 PM

Motion by Chair Martin, second by Ms. Gioiello; all in favor, none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Savannah Beaulieu  
Secretary