

North Jersey NIGP Chapter #7

Chartered October 26, 1977

President: *Maria J. Rivera*

Treasurer/Membership: *Ehab Salama*

Vice President: *Kevin O'Keefe*

Secretary: *Michael Kupec, Jr.*

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

DECEMBER 18, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by President Maria Rivera. All were asked to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Maria J, Rivera asked member to remain standing for a prayer.

President Maria J. Rivera asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Denise Piskowski /Treasurer reported the balance was approximately \$20k. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion unanimously passed.

President Maria J. Rivera asked for a motion to accept the Minutes of the September 18, 2025. A Motion was made and seconded. Motion unanimously passed.

A new slate of officers and the executive board for NIGP Chapter 7 were announced and sworn in. Officers took an oath to uphold the chapter's bylaws and provide valuable meetings for members.

President Maria J. Rivera then introduced our first guest speakers.

Guest Speakers

David G. Brown II, MPA, QPA and Lori Buckelew (New Jersey League of Municipalities)

Legislative Update Report – November 2025

Legislative Representative

*(Prepared for the New Jersey League of Municipalities and **updated 12/3/2025**)*

1. Legislative Session Overview

New Jersey's 221st Legislative Session is now entering its lame duck period following the November 2025 elections. This session officially ends on January 13, 2026. During this period, legislative activity often accelerates as lawmakers attempt to move pending bills before the term concludes.

Currently, GPANJ is tracking more than 80 proposed bills that may impact public procurement, local contracting, and administrative operations. It is important to note that any bill not signed into law within 10 days after passage does not become law, a process known as the pocket veto. Additionally, all pending bills "die" at the end of the legislative term, requiring reintroduction in the next session for further consideration.

The Senate and Assembly calendars are set through January, and our primary concern remains the Legislature's decision regarding the Office of the State Comptroller, specifically, whether its procurement and

contracting oversight functions will remain within the agency or be transferred to the State Commission of Investigation (SCI). S4924 is a bill introduced on November 24, 2025. The bill is titled “Expands SCI investigatory powers and duties.” It proposes to transfer many of the investigatory and subpoena powers currently held by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) to the State Commission of Investigation (SCI). On December 1, 2025, S4924 was reported out of the Senate State Government Committee, with amendments, and advanced to Second Reading in the Senate. GPANJ will continue to monitor this issue closely and advocate for transparency, consistency, and stability in statewide procurement oversight.

2. Recent Chapter Laws Signed by the Governor

Two new laws affecting local government operations and procurement practices were signed into law this year:

- P.L.2025,c.152(October 20, 20, 2025): Requires employers or contractors engaged in public work for a public body to submit certified payroll records directly to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD). This measure strengthens compliance and enforcement of prevailing wage and labor standards on public contracts.
- P.L.2025, c.72 (June 30, 2025): Provides for the publication of required legal notices on government websites and through online news outlets.
 - Effective March 1, 2026, all local governments will be required to post their official notices on their municipal or county websites.
 - Between January 1 and December 31, 2026, local governments must also publish newspaper notices twice monthly (as required under P.L.2024, c.106) that include a direct link to the official webpage for public notices. This change modernizes transparency requirements and is expected to significantly reduce the cost of legal advertising over time.

3. Legislation Near the Governor’s Desk

S-2961: Establishes minimum qualifications for individuals employed on public works contracts.

S-2961 was introduced in March 2024. Its stated purpose was to establish minimum qualifications for persons employed under public works contracts in New Jersey, essentially setting baseline workforce standards for labor on publicly funded construction or maintenance work.

Specifically, the bill would have required that any contractor bidding on a public-works contract (funded wholly or partly by a public body) certify that each employee working on the project meets one of the following:

1. Holds at least a high school diploma or GED;
2. Is enrolled in an apprenticeship program equivalent to union-recognized standards for the relevant craft/trade; or
3. Has at least four years of documented work experience as a tradesperson, verified by tax filings.

The bill also reaffirmed existing registration requirements under the public-works contractor registration law (P.L. 1999, c. 238), including proper registration with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development and evidence of workers’ compensation coverage.

- S2961 passed both houses of the New Jersey Legislature on June 30, 2025, with large bipartisan support: the Senate approved it 39-0, and the Assembly passed it as a substitute for A-4124.

- However, on October 20, 2025, the bill was subject to a conditional veto by the Governor. Thus, S2961 has *not* become law as of this time..

The Governor’s veto memorandum cited concerns about how the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) would administer the new apprenticeship and qualification-documentation requirements and indicated that uniform, more effective administrative standards would need to be established before the law could function as intended.

4. Recent Actions (12/01/2025)

S-1518 is titled “An Act establishing procedures and standards with respect to certain public-service privatization contracts.” Its goal is to regulate how state or local agencies contract out (privatize) services previously provided by public employees

Key Definitions and Thresholds:

- The bill applies to a “privatization contract,” defined as an agreement valued at \$500,000 or more for local agencies (municipalities, local boards, etc.), or \$1,000,000 or more for state-level agencies.
- The contract must cover services that are “substantially similar to and in lieu of” services previously provided by public employees, i.e., core public services outsourced to a private entity.
- Certain contract types are excluded from the definition, including contracts solely for legal, management consulting, engineering/design services, as well as public works subject to prevailing wage laws.

If S1518 becomes law (or when applied), for any eligible privatization contract, the agency must:

- Prepare a public written statement describing the contract scope, service standards, number of employees, wages/benefits needed, and anticipated “net reduction of in-house costs.”
- Conduct a cost analysis and certification comparing the cost (and quality) of privatized services versus maintaining in-house public provision.
- Submit the certification and cost analysis to the public, the State Auditor, and affected employee organizations for review.
- Provide a public comment period (15 days) after the certification becomes available; affected unions or the public may request a hearing. If requested (or if warranted), a public hearing must be held within 30 days.
- Require that contractors meet strict conditions before award, including pay/benefit parity with public employees, non-discrimination, no history of debarment or serious legal violations, and staffing standards to ensure service quality does not decline.

If these procedures are not followed, the privatization contract would be invalid.

Status (as of December 2025)

- S1518 was introduced in the Senate on January 9, 2024.
- The bill was reported from the Senate Labor Committee with amendments, 2nd Reading, and referred to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. It has not yet become law.

- **Due to opposition from local government associations (e.g., the New Jersey State League of Municipalities) and concerns about administrative burden and cost to municipalities, the bill has not advanced to a final vote.**

S-4281 would amend New Jersey law governing public works and prevailing-wage contracts to allow partnerships and joint ventures, not just individual contractors, to bid on such contracts, provided that each member of the partnership or joint venture is independently registered.

Under existing law (P.L.1999, c.238; N.J.S.A. 34:11-56.48 et seq.), only a single registered contractor may bid on a public works or prevailing-wage contract. Joint ventures or partnerships are prohibited from bidding as a single entity.

- **Permits Joint Bids:** A partnership or joint venture may submit a bid for public works or prevailing-wage contracts if each party is independently registered at the time of bidding.
- **No Change to Registration Requirements:** All standard registration requirements for public works contractors, including prevailing-wage registration, remain in effect.
- **Immediate Effect (if enacted):** The bill stipulates that it would take effect immediately upon enactment.

5. New Legislation of Interest

As of today, no new legislation is receiving substantial attention that directly impacts local public contracting or procurement operations that have not already been previously mentioned.

6. 2025 Local Finance Notices (LFNs)

Two key Local Finance Notices (LFNs) issued by the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) this year are relevant to purchasing professionals:

- **LFN 2025-08:** Annual Contracting Threshold Update. Updates the bid and quotation thresholds for local contracting units, effective July 1, 2025, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3. Local officials should confirm their municipality’s adjusted thresholds and update procurement policies accordingly.
- **LFN 2025-10:** Storm Response & Recovery – Emergency Budget & Procurement Guidance. Provides updated guidance for emergency procurement and budgeting during storm response and recovery operations. The notice clarifies documentation standards, reporting requirements, and fiscal controls to ensure compliance with Local Public Contracts Law (LPCL) and emergency management statutes.

LFN 2025-11: Direct Install (Open Network) Energy Efficiency Program for Public Sector Entities. Authorizes municipalities, counties, school districts, and other contracting units to participate in the BPU’s “Direct Install” energy-efficiency program under an *open-network* model—allowing public entities to pursue energy upgrades (lighting, HVAC, etc.) while maintaining full compliance with the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.).

7. Staying Informed

To stay up to date on legislative and regulatory developments:

- Subscribe to the New Jersey League of Municipalities News Flashes for real-time legislative updates.
- Join the Government Purchasing Agents of New Jersey (GPANJ) to access the members-only message board where timely discussions and alerts are posted.
- Connect with NIGP North and South Chapters and the New Jersey Association of County Purchasing Officials, which communicate important procurement updates and professional training opportunities through their respective websites and newsletters.

Conclusion

As the 221st Legislative Session draws to a close, GPANJ will continue to advocate for laws and policies that support efficient, ethical, and transparent public procurement across all levels of government. We encourage all purchasing professionals to remain engaged and informed as the legislative term concludes and preparations begin for the 222nd Session in 2026.

Proposal to add a “whereas” clause to resolutions stating bid notices will continue to be posted in traditional locations in addition to the legally required website posting. Noted that government websites may not reach all potential bidders, necessitating broader outreach. For joint ventures, recommendation that lead government agency include controlling language in bid specifications to define operational direction.

Followed by a Q and A.

President Maria J. Rivera introduced our last Guest Speaker.

Guest Speaker

Dr. Olga Chaban – Senior Program Coordinator, Rutgers University – Center for Government Services

Dr. Chaban provided a brief overview of the 2026 Educational Forum. This upcoming conference is being finalized and will be held in Long Branch from April 23rd to 26th. The Center for Government Services offers the Valenti Stanton Scholarship for new QPAs, enabling free conference attendance. Ethics will be the focus of this year’s conference.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

President Maria J./ Rivera spoke about 2026 meeting dates and selection of topics for discussion for our quarterly meetings. Please note that if an urgent topic of business is brought forward by the state or federal government, speakers may be re-scheduled, as to prioritize urgent matters.

Regarding DLGS Contact Hours/CEUs, President Maria J. Rivera mentioned that moving forward, certificates would be emailed to those signing the attendance sheet.

President Maria J. Rivera then turned over the meeting to Former President, James J. Jorgensen to launch his NIGP Chapter 7 Version of “Purchasing Jeopardy”.

Closing Comments

President Maria J. Rivera announced that reminders of important dates will be distributed via email once all details are available.

President Maria J. Rivera mentioned that our March 2026 meeting would be held at the Somerville Elks Lodge 1068, 375 Union Avenue, Bridgewater, NJ 08807.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:30 PM. Motion unanimously passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Kupec, Jr.

Secretary