

**Approved LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 6, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in person**

CALL TO ORDER - The January 6, 2025 Re-organization meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at 6984 S. Delaware Drive, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, 18063 (formerly known as Centerfield School), Martins Creek, PA, 18063. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson DeBerardinis at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were M. DeBerardinis, S. Disidore, J. Mauser, C. Cook, D. Ascani, Solicitor J. Zator, J. Smethers, Twp. Manager and M. Mastrogiovanni, Twp. Secretary. There were 4 members of the audience present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A. ADMINISTRATION APPOINTMENTS

CHAIRMAN: MOTION by Susan Disidore, second by Chris Cook appointing **Michael DeBerardinis**. Vote: 5-0.

VICE-CHAIRMAN: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by John Mauser appointing **S. Disidore**. Vote: 5-0.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER / TREASURER/ASST. SECRETARY: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing **Jennifer Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

TOWNSHIP SECRETARY / PLANNING ADMIN./ ASST. TREASURER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **Melissa Mastrogiovanni**. Vote: 5-0.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS / ROADMASTER: MOTION by S. Disidore, second by J. Mauser appointing **M. DeBerardinis**. Vote: 5-0.

ASST. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS / ASST. ROADMASTER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **C. Cook**. Vote: 5-0.

REPRESENTATIVE TO SLATEBELT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE TO SLATE BELT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **M. Mastrogiovanni**. Vote: 5-0.

REPRESENTATIVE TO COUNTY 911 – MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE TO COUNTY 911 - MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing **M. Mastrogiovanni**. Vote: 5-0.

REPRESENTATIVE TO ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing **J. Mauser**. Vote: 5-0.

REPRESENTATIVES TO NON-UNIFORM EMPLOYEE PENSION PLAN: MOTION by S. Disidore, second by C. Cook appointing **S. Disidore and M. DeBerardinis**. Vote: 5-0.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE TO NON-UNIFORM EMPLOYEE PENSION PLAN: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

OPEN RECORDS OFFICER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

ALTERNATE OPEN RECORDS OFFICER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **M. Mastrogiovanni**. Vote: 5-0.

DELEGATE TO TAX COLLECTION COMMITTEE: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis second by S. Disidore appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

ALTERNATE TO TAX COLLECTION COMMITTEE: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis second by C. Cook appointing **M. Mastrogiovanni**. Vote: 5-0.

PSATS VOTING DELEGATE: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR: MOTION by S. Disidore, second by J. Mauser appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

ASST. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing **M. Mastrogiovanni**. Vote: 5-0.

TOWNSHIP FIRE COMPANY: LMBT / Sandt's Eddy Fire Company: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis second by J. Mauser appointing LMBT / Sandt's Eddy Fire Company as the Township Fire Company. Vote: 5-0.

TOWNSHIP RESCUE SQUAD: LMBT / Sandt's Eddy Fire Company: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis second by C. Cook appointing LMBT / Sandt's Eddy Fire Company as the Township Rescue Squad. Vote: 5-0.

BLS/ ALS PROVIDER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis second by C. Cook appointing **Suburban EMS** as the Township BLS / ALS Provider. Vote: 5-0.

FIRE COMPANY OFFICERS FOR 2025 (Acknowledgment): G. Russo, Fire Chief read the list of Fire Company Officers for 2025. **MOTION** by S. Disidore, second by M. DeBerardinis acknowledging the Fire Company Officers list for 2025. Vote: 5-0.

VOLUNTEER LAND ACQUISITION / PROJECT MANAGER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **J. Mauser**. Vote: 5-0.

VOLUNTEER TOWNSHIP REP. SLUDGE / BIOSOLIDS / WELCOME CENTER NATIVE PLANTS GARDENER: - MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing **Howard Klein**. Vote: 4-0-1, David Asceni voted no.

B. PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

TOWNSHIP SOLICITOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing **Zator Law Office**. Vote: 5-0.

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by Disidore appointing **Carroll Engineering (J. Coyle)**. Vote: 5-0.

TWP. ZONING OFFICER/ BUILDING CODE OFFICIAL: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing Anthony DiSante. Vote: 5-0.

ASSISTANT ZONING OFFICER / ALT. BUILDING CODE OFFICIAL: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing Ronald Kimes as the Assistant Zoning Officer and Alt. Building Codes Official. Vote: 5-0.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE OFFICER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing A. DiSante. Vote: 5-0.

ASSISTANT PROPERTY MAINTENANCE OFFICER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing R. Kimes as the Assistant Property Maintenance Officer. Vote: 5-0.

SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing Ryan Engler. Vote: 5-0.

ALTERNATE SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing Barry Isett & Associates. Vote: 5-0.

FLOOD PLAIN ADMINISTRATOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing J. Coyle. Vote: 5-0.

ALTERNATE FLOOD PLAIN ADMINISTRATOR: MOTION M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing A. DiSante. Vote: 5-0.

ROAD OCCUPANCY ADMINISTRATOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing J. Coyle. Vote: 5-0.

UCC INSPECTOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing BARRY ISETT & ASSOCIATES. Vote: 5-0.

TOWNSHIP AUDITOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore appointing CAMPBELL, RAPPOLD & YURASITS, LLP. Vote: 5-0.

DELIQUENT STREET LIGHT COLLECTOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing AMATO & KEATING, P.C. Vote: 5-0.

DELIQUENT SANITATION COLLECTOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing KEYSTONE COLLECTION GROUP. Vote: 5-0.

DELIQUENT REAL ESTATE COLLECTOR: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook appointing NORTHAMPTON COUNTY TAX UNIT. Vote: 5-0.

C. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

RECREATION BOARD LIASION: MOTION by S. M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing C. Cook. Vote: 5-0.

OFFICE LIASION: MOTION M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing S. Disidore. Vote: 5-0.

VACANCY BOARD (1-year term): MOTION by D. Ascani, second by C. Cook appointing **Rich Grucela**. Vote: 5-0.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN: MOTION M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing **BILL HUMPHRIES**. Vote: 5-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION RE-APPOINTMENT (two vacancies - 4-year term): Sandra Newman sent in her letter of request not to be re-appointed. Staff will re-advertise the position.

ZONING HEARING BOARD RE-APPOINTMENT (5-year term): **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore re-appointing **Philomena Nagy** to the Zoning Hearing Board. Vote: 5-0.

RECREATION BOARD RE-APPOINTMENT: Martha Posner sent in her letter of request not to be re-appointed. Staff will re-advertise the position.

D. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPENSATION

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FEES – RESOLUTION No. 2025-01: M. DeBerardinis read Resolution No. 2025-01. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser adopting Resolution No. 2025-01 establishing professional fees for the Solicitor, Township Engineer, Zoning Officer/ BCO and 3rd Party UCC Services. Vote: 5-0.

EMPLOYEE WAGES – PER 2025 BUDGET & TEAMSTERS LOCAL 773 CONTRACT: **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore acknowledging the Employee Wages per the 2025 Budget and the Teamsters Local 773 Contract. Vote: 5-0.

E. TAX / ASSESSMENT COLLECTORS AND FEES

Chairman M. DeBerardinis read following Appointments:

EARNED INCOME TAX COLLECTOR:	KEYSTONE COLLECTIONS GROUP
LOCAL SERVICE TAX COLLECTOR:	KEYSTONE COLLECTIONS GROUP
SANITATION ASSESSMENT COLLECTOR:	KEYSTONE COLLECTIONS GROUP

MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser approving those appointments. Vote: 5-0.

STREET LIGHT ASSESSMENT COLLECTOR: MOTION M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser appointing **J. Smethers**. Vote: 5-0.

SANITATION ASSESMENT / FEES RESOLUTION No. 2025-02: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser adopting Resolution 2025-02 establishing the Sanitation Assessment / Fees for 2025 in the amount of \$390.00 per Residential Dwelling unit with an early payment discount of 5% (\$19.50 per unit) and 10% late fee of delinquent balance. Vote: 5-0.

STREET LIGHT ASSESSMENT – RESOLUTION No. 2025-03: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore adopting Resolution No. 2025-03 establishing the Street Light Assessment for 2025 in the amount of \$0.55 per foot of frontage for Improved Properties and \$0.138 per foot of frontage of Unimproved properties, same as last year and bills will go out in April. Vote: 5-0.

BOND LIMITS:

TWP. MANAGER / TREASURER / ASST. SECRETARY: \$500,000 & TWP. SECRETARY / PLANNING ADMIN./ ASST. TREASURER: \$250,000: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore to approve the Bond limits (same as last year). Vote: 5-0. second

F. TOWNSHIP DEPOSITORY: MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser establishing **Fidelity Bank** as the Township Depository. Vote: 5-0.

H. ESTABLISHMENT OF 2025 PAID HOLIDAYS:

Jan. 1st – New Year’s Day, February 17th – Presidents Day, April 18th – Good Friday, May 26th – Memorial Day, July 4th– Independence Day, Sept. 1st – Labor Day, Nov. 27th – Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28th – Friday after Thanksgiving, Dec. 24th – Christmas Eve, and Dec. 25th – Christmas Day. MOTION by S. Disidore, second by C. Cook approving the 2025 paid holidays. Vote: 5-0.

I. MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE – MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook. Acknowledging the 2025 IRS mileage reimbursement rate at **\$0.70 per mile.**

J. MEETING DATES FOR 2025: M. DeBerardinis read the following meeting dates:
Board of Supervisors – 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. with the following exceptions: July 14th, September 8th and December 15th. As needed, the Board will meet on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commission – 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. (as needed)
Zoning Hearing Board – 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. (as needed)
Open Space Advisory Board – 4th Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. (as needed)
Recreation Board – 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. (as needed)
Environmental Advisory Council – 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. (as needed)
Agricultural Security Area Committee - 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (as needed)
All meetings will be in person until further notice.
MOTION by S. Disidore, second by C. Cook to approve the meeting dates for 2025. Vote: 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The Re-organization Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Mastrogiovanni, Township Secretary
Lower Mount Bethel Township

Approved

**LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES – January 6, 2025 @ 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER - The January 6, 2025 regular meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at 6984 S. Delaware Drive, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, 18063 Martins Creek, PA, 18063. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson DeBerardinis at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were M. DeBerardinis, S. Disidore, C. Cook, D. Ascani, J. Mauser (zoom) J. Smethers, M. Mastrogiovanni, J. Zator, Solicitor, & J. Coyle, Township Engineer. There were approximately 5 members of the audience present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 16, 2024. Revisions made – Pg. 1, under Courtesy of the Floor last sentence change to false sense of security. Pg. 3 – D. Ascani’s report – take out during the slow months. **MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by S. Disidore to approve the minutes as revised. Vote: 5-0.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR - None.

SUBDIVISIONS / ZONING – None.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Resolution 2025-04 – Providing for the furnishing of Electric Street Lighting Service. Jen asked the representative from PPL the questions the Board asked. We can’t shop the distribution charge, only the supply charges. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis to adopt Resolution 2025-04. The Board asked Jen reach out to the representative from PPL with a few more questions: what kind of lights they are (glare and color); if the entire fixture and arm will be replaced or just retrofitted, and if Talen would give us a discount (Talen has nothing to do with PPL). **MOTION** rescinded by M. DeBerardinis. Tabled.

2. Discussion of Street Light Assessment – Jen discussed the spreadsheet she prepared showing the different options for unimproved and improved lots. There are 90 streetlights in the Township. If we spread the street light assessment for all residents, it would calculate to \$11.30 per household. D. Ascani asked if businesses are paying the street light assessment. Jen will look into that. Tabled.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss Establishing a New Committee for Community Events (C. Cook) – Tabled to the February 3rd BOS meeting when N. Palmeri can attend.

2. Increased Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Hours – J. Smethers explained per Anthony, he would need an additional 8 hours per week. At \$75/hr., we’d need another \$31,200 in the budget. Since this is more than 25% of the budgeted line item, and the budget cannot be reopened because 2024 was not a municipal election year, it would need to be by resolution utilizing additional funds on hand that have not be appropriated. There may be approximately \$45,000 in 2024 funds. Those figures will be finalized by the April 1st audit deadline. D. Ascani noted he doesn’t agree with complaint driven property maintenance violations and would like a more thorough zoning report. S. Disidore suggested an organized approach, identify the issues, and prioritizing the projects in an organized manner that the Board agrees upon. D. Ascani suggested the township tackle the worst projects, especially unsafe situations. Some areas to look at are the 2 oil tanks on Main Street (property owner is either Sipos or Hoffman), Ann & Alpha junk cars, Pioneer Store putting out refrigerators and coolers, Martins Creek –

Belvidere Hwy property will old truck and equipment, and a home with a tarp in place of the roof on Main Street.

J. Mauser suggested Anthony reach out to Zack Rudd from The Fish & Boat Commission and Nate Prichard from NCCD regarding remediation of the oil tanks. The Board suggested Anthony goes around the Township and make a list, possibly with J. Smethers. Also, staff should include information about property maintenance enforcement in the Newsletter.

1. Board of Supervisors Minutes Protocol – J. Smethers indicated this topic is J. Matthew's request to have the bills list included in the minutes. M. DeBerardinis mentioned if the bill is included in the minutes, they wouldn't be posted until they are approved a month later. J. Smethers indicated a right-to-know request can be submitted for a copy of the bills. Mike also stated the township is not staffed to answer the numerous questions regarding the bills that the staff will end up getting. J. Smethers suggested placing copies of the bill list the night of the meeting with the agenda. The Board agreed.

CORRESPONDENCE - All Correspondence is in the Township office.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS MOTION - M. DeBerardinis second by C. Cook to pay the bills in the amount of \$56,016.54. Vote: 5-0.

REPORTS

Chairman's Report – No report.

Township Engineer Report – J. Coyle reported December was quiet. He had a meeting at the Blum property to address the grading plan issues. There haven't been any Planning Commission meetings the past couple of months. He is still working on the Martins Creek Belvidere Highway Culvert project.

Township Solicitor Report – J. Zator hand delivered tonight the CAPZO chain of custody documentation regarding the November 2011 map. The Township already has in their possession the GIS map. J. Zator submitted his written report with no further comments.

Board Members Reports

D. Ascani – Dave asked about the list of prior Supervisors for the plaques to be displayed at the Centerfield School. Dave asked that we update the signs at the Riverton bathrooms and by the water fountains to say, "not potable water".

C. Cook – Chris reported we are invited to "Stop the Bleed" hosted by UMBT at the Mt. Bethel Firehouse. Chris asked about the age of the Centerfield Building and finding out the historic perimeters, maybe we can look into getting funds to fix the building.

S. Disidore – No report.

J. Mauser – No report.

Township Manager Report – J. Smethers reported on the grants she applied for. The Fire Company was awarded \$14,300.00 for a Public Safety grant for turn-out gear and a \$5,000 Hotel Tax grant for “May Day”. She has not received a response for the Hotel Tax band shell grant request yet and is not optimistic. However, she applied for an LSA grant for the bandshell and is working with an analyst who had follow up questions and is hopefully that grant will be awarded. We were not awarded the Grow Norco grant for the lights at Centerfield and the garage. Since we still have an open grant with Grow Norco for the cinder shed, that may have influenced the award. The cinder shed construction will be starting on March 24th and will be completed by April 30th.

Plainfield Township permanently gated off Upper Mud Run Road, we will be able to gain access, and they will provide us with a key. We received a letter from Blue Wave Solar Panels if we were interested in putting them up on our Martins Creek Belvidere Hwy property.

Jen spoke to the Forks Township manager regarding a traffic study/ordinance to limit trucks on township roads and post signs no trucks except local delivery. Forks has some local roads posted, but the trucks are still traveling on the local roads that are posted. Penn DOT may have been involved. The manager will get more information for Jen.

Jen reached out to Michael Emili regarding dredging the 1st bridge on Little Creek Rd. Mr. Emili indicated that was never on their schedule. Jen will follow up with him. F. Heitzman noted that was something Professional Contractors were going to do, they were hired by the County.

Jen mentioned a letter we received from the EAC regarding Plainfield Sludge Ordinance 519. The State Attorney General could sue any municipality that tries to stop the spreading of sludge since the practice has been approved by DEP. The Board decided they would like to wait and see how things go with Plainfield.

Road Department Report – F. Heitzman reported their employees had vacations scheduled and holidays the past 2 weeks. They took care of some trees that were down, drain openings, and snow removal. They fixed a big hole on Center Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT - J. Matthews asked about the missing cameras at Gravel Hill. J. Smethers indicated the electrician took it down to work with Met Ed on getting a new electrical box.

ADJOURNMENT - The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Mastrogiovanni, Township Secretary - Lower Mount Bethel Township