

LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2026 @ 6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER - The April 7, 2026, Regular Monthly meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at the Bangor Area Middle School. The meeting was called to order by Chairman C. Cook at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were M. DeBerardinis, D. Ascani, R. Siegfried, J. Keifer, J. Zator, Solicitor J. Coyle, Engineer, M. Hart and M. Mastrogiovanni. There were approximately 100 plus members of the audience present. Chairman Cook announced there was an Executive Session held on 4/6/26 for Personnel.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - February 16, 2026, March 2, 2026. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by J. Keifer to approve the minutes as submitted. Vote: 5-0.

SUBDIVISIONS / ZONING – None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. MJWA – R. Budihis. Meadow project grant / scope and budget (grant closes the end of April). Rich explained the grant, it's a 25% match. They need \$5,000 more in cash. They also need to buy logs. D. Ascani indicated he can help them with the logs. Rich mentioned they need to rent a backhoe, skid steer and operator for 1 week. They would like to use \$6,000 from the Open Space funds. J. Kiefer asked it were allowed to use Open Space funds for this project. J. Zator indicated yes you can, as long as you confirm the property was acquired with Open Space Funds. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by C. Cook to approve moving forward with the grant and approve using \$6,000 in Open Space Fund subject to confirmation that we are allowed to use those funds for this project. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

2. Resolution 2026-05 Amending the Fire Apparatus and Vehicle Use Agreements with LMBT/Sandt's Eddy Volunteer Fire Company. This is amended adding the Rock Proof Nozzle Jet boat and aluminum tandem axle boat trailer. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by R. Siegfried to approve Resolution 2026-05. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

3. Resolution 2026-06 – Lessee to approve and authorize the execution and delivery of Fire Company Boats, trailer and dry suits. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by D. Ascani to approve Resolution 2026-06. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

4. Resolution 2026-07 Authorizing the purchase and financing of the Rock Proof Nozzle Jet 1872, Aluminum Tandem Axle Trailer, Inmar SAR 380 and 8 Dry Suits. G. Russo noted this purchase was approved in November 2025. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by J. Keifer to approve Resolution 2026-07. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

5. Approval to apply for Delaware Valley Workers' Compensation Trust Mini-Grant. M. Hart indicated this grant is for back up cameras for Public Works truck for increased safety when backing up. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by R. Siegfried to allow M. Hart to apply for the grant. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

6. Approval to purchase an HP ProBook for Road Crew up to \$1000. J. Keifer asked what it will be used for. M. Hart indicated they can use it for ordering and reporting to Penn DOT. D. Ascani asked if in the future can it be used for payroll. Megan said it can be. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by C. Cook to approve purchase of an HP Pro Book for Road Crew up to \$1,000. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

7. Fire Co. Approval of Alcohol at May Day on May 16, 2026. G. Russo indicated this is the 3rd year they have been selling beer & wine, they also invite Suburban EMS and PA State Police to their event. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by D. Ascani to approve the Fire Co. to sell alcohol at May Day. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

8. Mowing of Pacchioli Field. M. Hart indicated they are asking for an increase up to \$2,000, we reimburse the Creekers to do the mowing. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by M. DeBerardinis to reimburse the Creekers up to \$2,000 for mowing Pacchioli Field. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

9. Approval to list the 1998 Mack Tandem Axle Dump Truck on Municibid. M. Hart indicated the truck has a cracked frame and not able to be utilized. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by D. Ascani to sell the truck on Municibid. There was discussion about what it's worth and what price to list the reserve at. **MOTION** and second withdrawn to get a local appraisal to see what it's worth. Tabled to the May 4th BOS Meeting.

10. Discussion regarding financial support for LMBT/Sandt's Eddy Volunteer Fire Company. J. Keifer indicated he met with the Sub-Committee. They would like to see more money brought back in from large businesses. Jeff asked that the Township reimburse the Fire Company for their appreciation dinner. It was \$5,000, they shouldn't have to pay for their own appreciation dinner to appreciate themselves. **MOTION** by J. Keifer to reimburse the Fire Company \$5,121.10 for their appreciation dinner. Motion dies, it wasn't on the agenda, this will be put on the May 4th agenda to discuss reimbursement. G. Russo indicated their operating expenses are \$127,760.00; they have to do \$73,760.00 in fundraising each year which is not realistic. They are working hard on at least a dozen grants. George talked about the letter campaign, less than 25% of the residents donate to that campaign. George discussed their budget. Physicals for their 48 active members, which the township requires is going to be \$23,000, they have only \$10,000 budgeted. D. Ascani suggested keeping this on the agenda every month. The subcommittee meets monthly. The Fire. Co. will put together numbers for the Township Budget.

11. Discussion regarding current and future infrastructure needs and potential planning priorities. J. Coyle indicated Upper Mud Run Road and Little Creek Road are still bad from the flood. The estimate over a year ago was approximately 3 million dollars. Justin noted if Upper Mud Run Road is not fixed, it may eventually need to be closed. C. Cook indicated the Centerfield Parking lot is a disaster, T. Hriczak did put up a light. J. Larrison commented Front Street truck traffic has been directed to Lower Mud Run Road. D. Ascani suggested applying for grant money. J. Keifer would like us to make a prioritized list of projects. J. Coyle is authorized to work with Public Works and the Supervisors to do a feasibility investigation and framework for a grant application and put a plan in place.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Action on Amendment to D. Ascani Separation Agreement. Public Comment by A. Gasparetti, he was Chairman of the Board back in January 2000. Mr. Gasparetti clarified the agreement was voted upon and pertains solely if there was any reinstatement as a police officer, and only a police officer, it does not pertain to any other employment with the Township.

Public Comment by T. Rehrig – Todd referred to Article B which places certain restrictions to application or employment with LMBT. Article 10 doesn't make sense and is ambiguous. Also being a Township Supervisor should be considered as employment.

Public comment by K. Sniker – Mr. Sniker was also a former Supervisor when this agreement was put in place. Mr. Sniker mentioned the intention of the agreement was only related to employment as a police officer and was written 26 years ago.

Public Comment by H. Klein – Mr. Klein noted regardless of the intention, Mr. Ascani accepted \$28,000 not to be a police officer and the Board of Supervisors should deny the amendment. Public Comment by K. Buehler – If you amend this agreement, he can apply for other employment with LMBT and should have to pay back the \$28,000.

Public Comment by K. Brewer – Supervisor Ascani is elected by the people, according to the 2nd class township code, you can be employed by the Township and go around and check roads every year. D. Ascani noted there were 2 signatures on that agreement, those 2 Supervisors stood up and stated exactly what the agreement was meant for. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by M. DeBerardinis to deny the amendment to the separation agreement and leave it the way it is. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - abstained, C. Cook - aye.

C. Cook asked is there a motion to amend the agenda to discuss the Road Master position. There was no motion made.

2. Discussion and consideration of the MC OPCO LLC proposed revised settlement term. M. Hart indicated this was the negotiated offer, full amount 10 years repayment period at no interest. J. Kiefer mentioned this includes \$20,800.00 from the Fire Tax. J. Matthews mentioned a few years ago Talen wanted to buy 1,2 miles by De Pues Rd. 2 lots are adjacent to the boat launch, maybe we could re-negotiate with them.

J. Keifer asked J. Zator if there are any consequences if we don't pay and renegotiate. J. Zator indicated they could, but he has not recollection of their interest in those lots. The amount was approved at the May 2025 meeting, the School and County have already paid. M. DeBerardinis noted this is smart to enter into this agreement, 10 years at no interest.

MOTION by D. Ascani, second by M. DeBerardinis to set up a meeting with Mark Jackson one more time to negotiate a reduction. MOTION WITHDRAWN.

MOTION by D. Ascani, second by C. Cook to not approve the re-payment settlement agreement for the time being to allow M. Hart to set up a meeting with 2 Supervisors, Mark Jackson and the Township Manager. J. Keifer asked it to be tabled, rather than not approved. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - nay, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

3. Discussion and consideration for appointment of Office Liaison. J. Keifer explained at the Re-organization they eliminated the position but should reconsider and suggested the Office Liaison be the Chairman to discuss everyday operations. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by M. DeBerardinis to appoint the Chairman of the Board be the Office Liaison. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - abstained, C. Cook - aye.

4. Discussion and consideration for Part-time Office Clerk (co-up BASD). **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by C. Cook to hire a Part-time clerk either through an agency or through the co-up program at BASD for 10 hours per week at \$15.00 per hour. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

5. Discussion and consideration for Part-time Public Works (co-up BASD). M Hart indicated we received an application from the BASD Co-up, but after to speaking to M. Hess, they don't need any help. No action taken.

6. RFP – Farming at the Meadows. J. Keifer recommended the following revisions to the RFP: 20 acres, Deadline for RFP – 4/29/26, The term shall be for five (5) years, after that the current farmer will be offered to continue the lease first, if they're not interested, then it can go out to bid. Use of Property: growing of harvesting alfalfa, hay, or forages such as grasses, cereals, and legumes. No other crops, including without limitation corn or soybeans. Financial Proposal: the annual lease payment of \$1.00 for the property. Insurance & Indemnification: Not a separate policy in commercial transaction. J. Zator indicated they can have the Township listed as an additional insurer, there is no extra premium cost adding that. Public Comment by P. McNerney – This is a passive recreation park; it should be looked into other ways to clean it up. This was bought by the Township as a park and functioning as an active eco-system. There are cross trails and fishing season is open, farmers need to be aware of this. J. Kiefer mentioned the fields need to be cleaned up, but then the cross trails will be re-opened. J. Keifer noted the RFP is ready to go, and can we move forward in advertising the RFP due by 4/29/26. M. Hart noted it should be 30 days for an RFP. J. Zator indicated the 30 days is normal practice, but you can make that exception. **MOTION** by J. Keifer, second by D. Ascani to advertise the Farming RFP at the Meadows upon final Solicitor review with the RFP due date of 4/29/26. J. Kiefer asked the Fire Company to do a controlled burn of the weeds. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

CORRESPONDENCE - All Correspondence is located in the Township office.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS – MOTION by C. Cook, second by M. DeBerardinis to pay the bills in the amount of \$215,868.27. No Public Comment. Vote: M. DeBerardinis - aye, J. Keifer - aye, R. Siegfried - aye, D. Ascani - aye, C. Cook - aye.

REPORTS

Solicitor Report - J. Zator’s written report submitted.

Engineer Report - J. Coyle noted he sent pictures of the MC Belvidere Hwy. Reconstruction Project.

Chairman Report - C. Cook reported the Rec. Board would like permission to have line dancing on 5/9/26 in the gym. All proceeds will be given to the Fire Company.

Board Members Reports - None.

Township Manager Report - None.

Asst. Manager / Secretary Report - None.

Zoning Officer Report - Written report submitted.

Fire Company Report - Written Report submitted.

Road Department Report - None.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR/PUBLIC COMMENT

Catherine Buehler – 10438 Mill Creek Rd. Catherine read highlights of her letter opposing the proposed construction of the Data Center on land currently zoned for Agricultural Use. Data centers bring significant impacts, including heavy infrastructure demands, increased traffic during construction, high energy and water consumption, noise from constant operation, and potential strain on local utilities. These impacts are not consistent with agricultural land use and could permanently alter the surrounding community.

Our township has worked hard to preserve farmland and protect natural resources. Converting agricultural land for industrial development threatens those efforts and diminishes the long-term sustainability and character of our area.

They respectfully urge the Board to uphold the integrity of our zoning ordinances and deny approval of this project on agricultural land. Once farmland is lost, it cannot be replaced.

Jeremy Loveland - 8727 Pleasant View Rd. Jeremy also expressed his opposition to the Data Center and the effects it will have on our Agricultural Land, high energy, water consumption and noise.

R. Siegfried announced he will be voting no. D. Ascani noted he’s not against the data center going on Industrial land, we can stop them from taking Agricultural Land and changing it to be zoned Industrial.

ADJOURNMENT - The Regular Public Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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