

LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER - The September 14, 2026 meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at the Chelsea Sun Inn, 487 Stone Church Dr. Mt. Bethel, Pennsylvania, 18043. The meeting was called to order by Chairman D. Ascani at 7:00 p.m. Also in attendance were C. Cook, M. DeBerardinis, J. Mauser, E. Richards, J. Ulrich, J. Lemak, M. Mastrogiovanni and S. Mack. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were approximately 75 plus members of the audience present.

Chairman Ascani thanked the Howard family for donating the facility at no charge.

Announcement of Executive Session - Chairman Ascani announced an executive session was held on August 24, 2026, to discuss personnel matters, with no action taken.

Zoning Hearing board and Planning Commission Vacancies - Chairman Ascani announced that vacancies are open for two positions with applications accepted until filled: Zoning Hearing Board, a five-year term until January 2030 and the Planning Commission, a four-year term until January 2028.

Community events – Chairman Ascani announced the following community events; Bell Tower Cultural Center, September 19th, movie night, “The Art of Racing in the Rain” at 7 P.M.; September 22nd, Feisty Female Tea, Sisters in Innovation at 1:30 P.M., and September 27th, Little Bird and the Bad Eggs at 7 P.M. Finally, Sandt’s Eddy Fire Company’s car show is on October 18th from 8 A.M. to 3 P.M. at the Riverton Fields.

Approve Board of Supervisors minutes – August 17, 2026 and August 24, 2026. MOTION by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to approve the minutes as submitted. Vote: 4-0-1, E. Richards abstained.

Public Hearing – Adoption of Ordinance 2026-01

Solicitor Uldrich clarified that the ordinance sets foundational regulations for potential future data centers, no plan has yet been submitted. This Ordinance may be amended later.

D. Ascani noted the public comment rules: there is a three-minute limit and the public comment is for Township Residents and taxpayers only.

MOTION by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to adopt Ordinance 2026-01.

Public Comments on the Data Center Ordinance

1. **Raymond Dilione:** The board received a formal objection outlining 27 deficiencies from Denise Webster that expressed her concerns that adopting the proposed ordinance would bind the Township to its current form if an application were submitted. He suggested a three-month delay to revise the proposed Ordinance.
2. **Dominic Buscemi:** The data center offers no public value and will sap resources, raise electricity bills, use excessive water, and cause job loss to AI. Urged the board to stand up for the community.
3. **Todd Rehrig:** Applauded the board for bringing the ordinance to a vote and hoped for its approval, with a commitment to proactively create amendments as technology changes.
4. **Gary Dorfner:** Stated that a delay would be a serious mistake and advocated for passing the proposed ordinance as is.

5. **Adelise Bruen:** Expressed concerns about the impact of sound and vibrations on livestock, wildlife, habitats, and water quality.
6. **Julie Bruen:** Described existing noise issues from the nearby power plant, which have worsened. Voiced concerns about additional data center noise affecting property values, private wells, and resident health.
7. **Kevin Swanson:** Reiterated concerns about power plant noise and asked if the proposed ordinance protects property values. Solicitor Ulrich explained that a future plan must comply with the subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO).
8. **Catherine Buehler:** Questioned the board's decision not to adopt a curative amendment, which would have provided 180 days to work on the ordinance.
9. **Rod Ruland:** Current decibel readings are 61-63 dBA near the Talon power plant, questioned how the ordinance's lower limits (40-55 dBA) could be enforced. Another resident three miles away can hear the plant and fears a data center will be louder.

E. Richards advocated for passing the ordinance to establish protections immediately rather than having not having any guidelines for another three months.

The **MOTION** to adopt Ordinance 2026-01 was approved with a 5-0 vote.

D. Ascani directed the Planning Commission to review all public comments and input from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

New Business

1. **Zoning Map Amendment Petition** – D. Ascani acknowledged the Supervisors receipt of the Petition of Martins Creek LLC, Triple Net Investments XCIX, LLC, RCM Properties XV, LLC, Rt 173 Investments Partners I, LLC, PD 6411 MBH, LLC to Amend the Lower Mount Bethel Township Zoning Map and change the zoning classification of properties identified at Northampton County Parcel Nos. G11-3-3, G11-3-7 and G11-3-6 from AP-Agricultural Preservation Zoning District to I-Industrial Zoning District and referred this matters to the LMBT Planning Commission and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for their review and comment.
2. **Farmland Preservation Policy** – P. McInerney, member of the Open Space Committee proposed a new "zoning neutral" policy for assessing farmland for preservation. The Township's Earned Income Tax (EIT) fund would cover any valuation difference. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting pending legal review.
3. **Appointments Assistant Roadmaster - MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by J. Mauser to appoint Eric Richards as Assistant Roadmaster. 4-0-1 vote, E. Richards abstained.
4. **Appoint** Melissa Mastrogiovanni as Emergency Management Coordinator and Juli Lemak as Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator - **MOTION** by C. Cook, second by M. DeBerardinis to appoint Melissa Mastrogiovanni as Emergency Management Coordinator, and Juli Lemak as Alternate (5-0 vote).
5. **Appoint** Jenny Riker was as a Recreation Board Member. - **MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to appoint Jenny Riker was as a Recreation Board Member. (5-0 vote).
6. **Resolution 2026-11: MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by E. Richards to approve Resolution 2026-11 approving updates and revisions to the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). (5-0 vote).
7. **Resolution 2026-12 & 2026-13: MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by E. Richards to approve Resolution 2026-12, authorizing the submittal of a grant application in the amount of \$198,042.00 to the Northampton & Monroe County Local Share Account programs for the LMB/Sandt's Eddy Fire Company for the purchase of rescue tools replacement project. (5-0 vote).
8. **Resolution 2026-14: MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by D. Ascani to approve Resolution 2026-14, authorizing the submittal of a grant application in the amount of \$147,380.16 To the Northampton County Local Shae Account Program for the LMB/Sandt's Eddy Fire Company for the purchase of mobile radio replacement. (5-0 vote).

9. **Resolution 2026-15:** MOTION by J. Mauser, second by E. Richards to approve Resolution 2026-15, authorizing the submittal of a grant application in the amount of \$147,380.16 to the Monroe County Local Share Account program for the purchase of mobile radios replacement. (5-0 vote).
10. **Sanitation Contract:** MOTION by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to authorize the sanitation contract be advertised for bid. (5-0 vote).
11. **MMO Announcement:** The Board announced the Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Township's 2027 pension plan contribution as \$17,410.00.
12. **Trick-or-Treat:** MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by C. Cook to set trick-or-treat for Saturday, October 31, 2026, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. (5-0 vote).

Old Business

1. **Request to Modify Hours of Operation for Gravel Hill** - Gerald Di Domenico, President of Gravel Hill, requested a change in operating hours from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM to 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday, to accommodate contractors and reduce evening truck traffic. Solicitor Uldrich stated he needs to review the existing contract and settlement agreement before a decision is made. The request was tabled until the next meeting. D. Ascani and J. Mauser and the Township engineer will tour the site.

Correspondence

All correspondence are located in the Township office.

Approval of Bills

MOTION by J. Mauser, second by M. DeBerardinis to approve the bills in the amount of \$81,834.22. (5-0 vote).

Reports

Township Solicitor: No report.

Chairman: No report.

Board Members

J. Mauser: J. Mauser reported he toured data centers in NJ, VA, and PA with some Residents. A full report will be presented next month.

M. DeBerardinis: No report.

C. Cook: No report

E. Richards: No report.

Township Manager: M. Mastrogiovanni reported she is working on LSA grants for the Fire Company. Sanitation bids will be advertised starting September 15, 2026.

Road Department: Written report submitted.

Fire Company: G. Russo thanked D. Ascani for contacting Ardent Mills for the donation he secured for the Fire Company's new equipment.

Courtesy of the Floor/Public Comment

- **Data Center Ordinance Concerns:** T. Rehrig voiced his concerns about the data center's noise, environmental impact, and property values. While the ordinance was passed, no specific plan or timeline for amending it to address these issues was established. The risk of an application being submitted under a potentially weak ordinance remains a key point of contention.

- **C. Buehler:** Ms. Buehler asked about the installation of a security camera at the Gravel Hill property, as per a prior agreement, was raised but not resolved. The solicitor's office will investigate, but no timeline was provided.
- **K. Swanson:** Mr. Swanson commented on road safety issues due to large truck traffic on Mount Pleasant Road were reported. The solicitor advised residents to contact PennDOT directly.

MOTION by D. Ascani, second by M. DeBerardinis to adjourn the Public Meeting at 8:45 p.m.
Vote: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Juli Lemak, Township Secretary / Planning Administrator
Lower Mount Bethel Township