approved

LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER - The October 19, 2026 meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at 6984 S. Delaware Drive, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, 18063.The meeting was called to order by Chairman D. Ascani at 7:10 P.M. Also in attendance were C. Cook, M. DeBerardinis, J. Mauser, E. Richards, M. Fisher, J. Lemak and M. Mastrogiovanni. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were approximately twenty members of the audience present.

Chairman Ascani announced an Executive Session was held earlier tonight to discuss potential litigation.

Announcements - Chairman Ascani made the following announcements:

- The Planning Commission Meeting to consider 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. re-zoning request scheduled for Tuesday, October 20, 2026 6:30 p.m. at Chelsea Sun is tabled at the request of the applicant.
- The regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on October 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Centerfield Building.

Approve Board of Supervisors regular meeting minutes – October 5, 2026. MOTION by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to approve the minutes as submitted. Vote: 5-0.

MOTION by D. Ascani, second by J. Mauser to amend the agenda, adding under "New Business" the sale of the 2005 Ford Explorer, and moving "Farmland Preservation Policy" from "Old Business" to be heard next. Vote: 5-0.

Farmland Preservation Policy - Ryan Shaw, Northampton County Farmland Preservation Administrator, reported that the county's second application round was approved on October 6, 2026. Lower Mount Bethel had four qualified applications covering 207 acres across four properties. Appraised values are not available. The Board considered the Open Space Committee's proposal to use Township Earned Income Tax (EIT) funds to bridge differences between appraisals and support farmland preservation. A discussion was held regarding the Township's 9010 Ordinance, appraisal methodology, state review, available funds, spending limits, and the need for a longer-term approach. M. DeBerardinis noted that a $2,000-per-acre difference across 207 acres could amount to $414,000. The Township's financial figures and annual EIT revenue were discussed as estimates.
R. Shaw explained that appraisals must be prepared by Pennsylvania-licensed general real-estate appraisers under applicable uniform standards. He described comparisons involving current zoning and sales of unencumbered and preserved properties. He also said the largest discrepancy among the seventeen appraisals received that year was $9,000: none in Lower Mount Bethel Township. Solicitor Fisher advised that the policy expressly address reimbursement of the Township's second-appraisal cost if an applicant withdraws after that appraisal. The Board discussed having a different appraiser conduct a second appraisal and comparing properties with equivalent Townships. The proposal was described as a temporary measure while the Township considers the longer-term effects of the 9010 Ordinance. **MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by D. Ascani to move forward with the policy to use EIT

funds to make up the difference with the two appraisals. Vote: 4-1 with M. DeBerardinis voting "no". C. Cook would like to look further into the 9010 Ordinance.

Consider awarding the Sanitation Bid. The current sanitation contract will expire October 31, 2026. Bids were received from Waste Management Inc., J.P. Mascaro and Sons, and Sanico Inc. The specifications included automated and manual service, with weekly and every-other-week collection options.

The Board discussed an October 19, 2026 letter from J.P. Mascaro raising bid-compliance concerns, particularly about Sanico's proposed Warren County landfill in Oxford, New Jersey. The solicitor focused on whether the proposed facility met the bid specification requiring a Pennsylvania DEP-approved landfill. Sanico representatives said the Northampton County solid-waste plan permits county-generated waste to go to permitted in-state or out-of-state facilities and requested time to provide supporting documentation. J.P. Mascaro disputed whether Warren County, New Jersey is among the facilities identified in the county plan.
The Board reviewed the bids received:

- Sanico's manual-service bid was cited as $574,080 annually, described by Waste Management as about 12% above current costs.
- J.P. Mascaro's 2027 manual price was cited as $677,181, compared with an approximate current cost of $511,000.
- Waste Management described its automated bid as the lowest responsive bid for automated service at the current service level and said its price would be about 1.5% below its 2026 price for 2027.
- Waste Management described automated collection as using a mechanical arm and compatible carts. The specifications included 200 additional carts, 100 for trash and 100 for recycling. Participants questioned whether the number would be sufficient; Waste Management said it had carts available and would work with the Township.
- J.P. Mascaro advocated retaining manual collection and described its approach to extra containers and recyclable materials. Sanico also described its manual collection and recycling capabilities.

MOTION by D. Ascani, seconded by J, Mauser to go into Executive Session to discuss the threat of litigation. Vote: 5-0.
The Board of Supervisors recessed for an Executive Session from 8:00 – 8:20 P.M. to discuss possible litigation.
Solicitor Fisher advised tabling the decision to review the landfill contract compliance, specifically Sanico's proposed New jersey landfill use. Documentation related to contract requirements must be submitted to the Township Manager by the end of business October 21, 2026.
MOTION by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to table the bid decision until a Special Meeting is held on October 26, 2026 at 7:00 P.M. Vote: 5-0. The comparative bid costs will be posted on the Township website.

Presentation – J. Mauser – Data Center Tours and Talen Energy Sound Studies Update: J. Mauser presented observations from tours of data centers in northern New Jersey, Allentown/Breinigsville, and Loudoun County, Virginia, addressing facility operations, cooling, backup generators, noise, lighting, water usage, and community impacts. Discussion included potential ordinance recommendations such as conditional-use requirements, residential setbacks, landscaping, noise limits

and monitoring, dark-sky lighting, generator-testing schedules, and early engagement with developers. Community-benefit agreements and standards appropriate for rural communities were also discussed. These were recommendations for consideration, not adopted provisions. J. Mauser confirmed that no data center proposal has been submitted and discussed additional site visits.
J. Mauser also provided an update on Talen Energy, transmission projects, and resident noise concerns. A meeting with Talen Energy representatives was held October 15, 2026 to discuss noise complaints and a facility tour; data center development and rezoning were not discussed. J. Mauser requested additional information from Talen and a tour for Township officials, the Environmental Advisory Council, and the Planning Commission. He also requested that the updated presentation be posted on the Township website. D. Ascani thanked J. Mauser for his work and preparation.

New Business

1. N. Palmeri, Rec. Board Chair. 2027 Budget. N. Palmeri presented the Recreation Board's 2027 budget request of $6,700, compared with $6,470 the prior year, citing inflation and event costs. Future events include the Holiday Market on November 22, 2026 and the Christmas Tree Lighting on December 5, 2026, and a potential spring community event. N. Palmeri mentioned volunteer needs, resident suggestions for future events, and projects such as an electronic sign. She also requested a separate Recreation Board account, distinct from the General Fund, with balances carried forward from year to year. **MOTION** by D. Ascani, second by C. Cook to approve the Rec. Board having their own separate bank account. Vote: 5-0.

2. G. Russo, Fire Chief - 2027 Budget. G. Russo presented the Fire Company's 2027 budget request and asked that its operating budget be considered for inclusion in the Township's General Fund. He explained that the mortgage refinancing that could increase payments by about $800 per month and raise the operating estimate from approximately $147,000 to $157,000. The Fire Company's equipment needs include a rescue truck and replacement of old rescue tools; grant applications have been submitted for the rescue tools.
Supervisors discussed tax increases, including one mill this year or the possibility of two mills, with differing views on the amount needed. The Township is already providing $30,000 per year to the Fire Company on behalf of the MCPO settlement, for 10 years. In addition, the Fire Company also will receive an additional donation of $20,000 from Talen. J. Mauser indicated he is comfortable with a 2 mill increase to support our Fire Company. J. Mauser offered a personal $100,000 contribution if the Board is inclined to only increase the taxes to 1 mill. The 1 mill would cover the Fire Company's operating expenses.
G Russo thanked J. Mauser and the Board for their support. G. Russo Sr. commented they cannot go on like this; they need the support of the Township.

3. 2027 Budget - The current Township draft budget assumed no tax increase. The Board requested a version showing tax-increase options for the next meeting on October 26, 2006, to include a two-mill General Fund increase; to be distinct from the fire tax, which is equipment restricted.

- The Board discussed the proposed Township office vehicle and prioritizing replacement of the road-department pickup.
- M. DeBerardinis asked about the increase of estimated tax collection costs of more than $12,000, and could we consider outsourcing which was discussed in past years.
- M. DeBerardinis discussed the 2027 paving priorities, including Hester Rd. and the village. D. Ascani indicated the Township parking lot and Centerfield parking lot need to be paved.

- C. Cook and D. Ascani mentioned Township building maintenance concerns, including the Centerfield building's roof condition, leaks, ceilings, lighting, parking-lot trip hazards, and drainage. They asked if there are any grants for the Centerfield building as a historical building.
  G. Russo mentioned he temporarily fixed the Rec. room ceiling, it was falling.
  J. Mauser suggested a roof inspection.

4. 2005 Ford Explorer – Melissa indicated the SUV was listed on Municibid twice and Facebook Marketplace and have received an offer of $2,500. **MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by D. Ascani to approve sale of the 2005 Ford Explorer for $2,500. Vote: 5-0.

Correspondence - All correspondence are located in the Township office.

Approval of Bills: **MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by D. Ascani to approve the bills in the amount of $24,546.33. Vote 5-0.

Public Comment for Taxpayers & Residents Only - Gary Dorfner commented he did not receive the Township newsletter. The mailing list was said to use sanitation addresses; staff were to investigate the issue. Gary also mentioned the newsletter is not available on the website.

Adjournment: MOTION by D. Ascani, second by M. DeBerardinis to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Juli Lemak
Township Secretary / Planning Administrator

approved

LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
October 26, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

Call to Order – The October 26, 2026 Special Meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at 6984 S. Delaware Drive, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, 18063. The meeting was called to order by Chairman D. Ascani at 7:00 P.M. Also in attendance were M. Deberardinis, C. Cook, J. Mauser, E. Richards, J. Uldrich, M. Mastrogiovanni and J. Lemak. There were approximately thirty plus attendees in the audience. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Chairman Ascani indicated there was an Executive Session held earlier tonight for potential litigation.

New Business – None.

Old Business

1. Sanitation bids - tabled from October 19, 2026. **MOTION** by C. Cook, second by J. Mauser to approve the low responsible bid from J.P. Mascaro & Sons for a three year-contract for manual trash pickup weekly/bi-weekly recycling. Contract service begins on November 1, 2026. Vote: 5-0.

2. 2027 Budget - The Board of Supervisors reviewed the proposed budget presented incorporating an overall 2 mill general real estate tax increase. The increase will cover Lower Mount Bethel Township Sandt's Eddy Fire Company's operating expenses of $157,363.77. There will be no increase in the Fire Tax. The remaining funds from the adjustment were balanced into municipal building maintenance and a used vehicle for the office. D. Ascani asked if any funds were allocated for the Roadmaster pay. M. Mastrogiovanni confirmed no funds were set aside for the Roadmaster position.

J. Mauser explained the Township needs to fully fund the operating expenses of the Fire Company, they shouldn't be spending 50% of their time fundraising. The final draft budget for November 2, 2026 is to be prepared with a 2 mill increase incorporating the Sandt's Eddy Fire Company's budgeted general expenses in the amount of $157,363.77 for Monday, with possible advertisement for the mandatory 20 day public inspection period.

Public Comment – Catherine Buehler asked for explanation of the 2 mill increase. J. Ulrich explained that the 2 mill increase is for the General real estate tax increase, not the Fire Tax.

Correspondence – All correspondence are located in the Township office.

Approval of the Bills - MOTION by J. Mauser, second by D. Ascani to pay the bills in the amount of $4,380.99. Vote: 5-0.

Public Comment

1. Gary Dorfner - Mr. Dorfner asked for clarification of the sanitation contract. J. Ulrich confirmed the award was for manual rather that automated pick-up, and the bid was awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. Sanico lacked authorization by a local landfill permitted by the PADEP and Northampton County Waste Management Facility, which constituted a fatal bid defect.

2. Brendan Bowers, President of Sanico asked whether the Township would provide written response as to why Sanico's lower bid was deemed unqualified. Solicitor Ulrich indicated a written explanation will not be forthcoming, he already gave his verbal legal opinion.

3. Al DeGenero, legal counsel for Mascaro, thanked the Board and indicated the General Manager will contact the Township Manager regarding the contract. Service is to begin on November 1, 2026.

4. David Lorenzo, representative from Waste Management – Mr. Lorenzo thanked the Board for their working relationship with the Township since 2012.

5. J. Matthews – Mr. Matthews asked if Mascaro was the lowest bid. J. Uldrich indicated they were the lowest responsible bidder for manual sanitation pickup every week/every other week recycling.

6. Carol Hall – Ms. Hall asked what the increase would be for next year's sanitation. D. Ascani clarified it would increase by $124.00 next year bringing the total fee to $511.08 and noted the bids are out of the Board's control; J.P. Mascaro was the lowest responsible bidder.

ADJOURNMENT – MOTION by C. Cook, second by E. Richards to adjourn the special meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Juli Lemak
Township Secretary/Planning Administrator