



Upper Mount Bethel Township

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**UPPER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS WS MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2024 – 7:00 PM**

*This meeting was held in person and live streamed through the Upper Mount Bethel Township Facebook page.

I.

Supervisor Bermingham called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance were Supervisor Bermingham, Supervisor Eckman, Supervisor Erler, Supervisor Friedman, Supervisor Albert, Manager Graziano, Township Solicitor Karasek, and Township Engineer Coyle.

Supervisor Bermingham asked for a Moment of Silence for the sudden passing of Ronold Karasek Jr., son of Solicitor Karasek.

II.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

MOTION by Supervisor Friedman to approve agenda, seconded by Supervisor Erler.
Vote: 5-0.

III.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tara Mezzanotte commented on the opening of Rt. 611 which is scheduled to open on November 4th, thereabouts. Tara thanked Supervisor Friedman for coming over to NJ for the retaining wall project.

Charles Cole, Riverton Rd., stated that, on behalf of the Well Ordinance Committee, they are in the final stages in presenting the Ordinance to the BOS. Charles commented on possible data warehouse complex coming to RPL, get professional help in evaluating data warehouse concepts.

Ron Angle, Million Dollar Hwy., commented on getting back to being a community. He urges the BOS to take a good look at what is being done and could be done down there, don't listen to a handful of people who continue to want to be obstructionists.

Oronde Issac, Red Fox Lane, stated he wanted to introduce himself. He stated that he has some free time on his hands and is looking to join the fire company and be more active in things in the community.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

Amanda Nyborg was not present to give her presentation on raising awareness on Autism.

Tara Mezzanotte-Tara stated that she is Warren County's representative to the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River, and she is here tonight to share with everyone that our river is in the Wild and Scenic River system and the group is doing a study and are looking to add tributaries and segments of the river to the study. Tara stated that the Resolution reaffirms UMBT as a Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Municipality and supports adding Slateford Creek, Jacoby Creek, Allegheny Creek, Oughoughton Creek, and Martins Creek to the LDWSR designation. Tara discussed the requirements for designation, eligibility and suitability, the benefits of designations, the goals of the management plan, and potential tributaries. There was a discussion on grants, eminent domain, zoning and ordinances, which remains the same.

V. ACTION ITEMS

1. Resolution No. 2024-21 LDWSR Reaffirmation and Expansion Study-Solicitor Karasek stated that he has not reviewed the resolution. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to table, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Discussion: Ron Angle stated that if someone wanted to build a church/building on a hill, will that be a problem. Ron cautioned the Board to take a very good look at this before they do anything. Supervisor Bermingham asked for clarification on the approval of the study then make the determination if we want to be part of this. Tara stated that what they are deciding to reaffirm that the 2008 resolution to join and that they are saying yes that they support study. Supervisor Erler stated that he is against tabling this because this is just the study, there is no cost to the Township. Supervisor Eckman stated that she would like to have Solicitor Karasek review the ordinance first before moving forward with anything. Vote:4-1. Supervisor Erler voting nay.
2. Preserve Grant Proposal-Manager Graziano discussed the proposal submitted by Simone Collins. This proposal is for services not covered under the previous grant, there is more work to be done. There is a \$5,000 cap for the extra work proposed. Supervisor Albert stated that the funds come out of the Open Space. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to approve the Simone Collins Preserve Grant Proposal with a \$5,000 cap on fees, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.

3. Resolution No. 2024-23 LSA Statewide Grant/Eastern Industries Renovation Project-Manager Graziano stated he, along with Township Engineer Coyle and Supervisor Friedman, discussed the possibilities of reviving Eastern Industries. Some of the renovations have taken place, including a new roof and new garage doors for the trucks. Engineer Coyle prepared an estimate for the renovation, \$747,500. For the LSA Statewide grants, we are allowed to apply for up to \$2million. With the scope of the work proposed, Manager Graziano asked TJ Lonergan to assist with the grant application. The cost is \$2,000 to apply and \$2,000 is grant is awarded for the project. Manager Graziano read the Resolution. Engineer Coyle stated this is full renovation of the building/garage, not the house. Stavros Barbounis asked if the technological aspect of the project is included in the estimate. Ron Angle stated that he hopes that there is a long-range plan. Supervisor Bermingham stated that the Board is talking about having a 10-year and 20-year plan. **MOTION** by Supervisor Erler to adopt Resolution No. 2024-23, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.
4. Resolution No.2024-24 USFWS-Manager Graziano stated that this Resolution is an opportunity to be able to apply for grants from the Federal Government. We are not applying for anything, but you have to ask permission to do it. This Resolution states that the Upper Mount Bethel Township BOS supports being officially included in the Federal Highlands Boundary as maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to adopt Resolution No. 2024-24, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.
5. Resolution No. 2024-25 TAC-Supervisor Erler stated that this is a Resolution establishing the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Jeff Williams was not present, therefore Supervisor Erler would like this to be tabled. **MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham to table, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Wild & Scenic UMBT Representative- Supervisor Bermingham stated that one letter of interest was submitted, Jeff Ackerman. **MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham to appoint Jeff Ackerman as the Wild & Scenic UMBT Representative, if Resolution No. 2024-21 gets approved, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 4-0-1. Supervisor Erler abstained.
2. Garbage Bill Discount-Manager Graziano stated that next year the garbage bill will increase and he would like to offer an incentive for the residents to pay your bill in full. Next year's bill will increase to \$543.75 + fee of \$7.25 =\$551.00. Discounts-10% bill total \$496.63, 5% bill total \$530.70, to be paid in full by April 30, 2025. Manager Graziano did include the 10% discount in the budget. Solicitor Karasek stated that a Resolution should be drafted. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to have Solicitor Karasek draft a trash bill Resolution for the 10% discount for next year, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.
3. Traffic Study for Riverton/River Rd.-Supervisor Friedman stated that he, Manager Graziano, and Engineer Coyle went down to River Rd and look at a situation that was reported, that tractor trailers are starting to use the roads more often. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to instruct our Engineer to perform a traffic study on Riverton/River Rd., seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Discussion: Ron Angle stated that there needs to be a spot for trucks to get weighed. Supervisor Erler stated that he feels it would be pointless to do the

study if there is no place for trucks to get weighed. Engineer Coyle stated that the intention is to restrict/minimum the number of trucks from using Riverton/River Rd. Supervisor Eckman stated that Lower Mount Bethel Township would have to be involved, due to the fact that portions of the road are located in their Township. Supervisor Bermingham stated that he would like to find an area where the trucks can pull over to get weighed before we move forward with a traffic study. Rich Klinge stated that all you would need to do is look at their registration. Supervisor Erler stated that maybe this would be good to pass on to the newly formed Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Charles Cole stated that he feels there is value in signage. Supervisor Friedman withdrew his motion for the traffic study and refer this to the TAC.

4. 2025 Budget-Manager Graziano discussed the 2025 budget and it is ready to be advertised for the 20 days before it gets approved. The budget this year is \$5,373,182 and he is happy to report there will be no tax increase this year. **MOTION** by Supervisor Eckman to advertise the 2025 budget is ready to be reviewed by the public, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.
5. Reschedule November 11th meeting-Supervisor Bermingham stated that since November 11th is Veterans Day, he would like to move the meeting the November 12th. Solicitor Karasek stated that he will not be able to attend on the 12th. **MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham that the November 11th BOS meeting be rescheduled to November 12th, 7pm, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Judith Henckel, Robin Hood Rd., commented on Wild & Scenic and when this first happened, everyone was afraid, due to Tocks Island.

Ron Angle, Million Dollar Hwy., commented on the term cost benefit study. The Wild & Scenic thing, if it passes, maybe cost benefit study should be done.

Mike Onufrak, Summerfield Dr., being a lifelong Dodger fan, the Dodgers lead in the third inning.

Stavros Barbounis, Potomac St., commented on data centers, and is very familiar with them as this is what he does for a living, if you have any questions about them, he is more than happy to sit down and discuss.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Manager Graziano announced that due to the dry weather, there is a burn ban in effect. Please refrain from any burning. We will let you know when it will be safe to burn. Just a reminder, garbage bills are due by December 31st.

Supervisor Erler announced that he attended the PSATS convention with Supervisor Friedman and Manager Graziano and found it to be very informative. Just a reminder to vote on November 5th. Stavros is handling the new website and so far, it looks great,

and encourages committee members to send pictures or information they would like to include on the website.

Supervisor Bermingham asked Stavros to give the Board until November 8th to provide any comments.

Supervisor Friedman announced the Well Committee has finished with the Well Ordinance and would like Solicitor Karasek to start working on getting the Ordinance adopted. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to instruct Solicitor Karasek to proceed with the necessary procedures to enact the Well Ordinance, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Vote: 5-0.

Supervisor Eckman announced the Veterans' Day Celebration on November 9th at the Community Park, starting at 4pm, with Fireworks at 6pm.

Supervisor Bermingham announced a free house power washing to any veteran who lives in Upper Mount Bethel Township who enters their name in our contest. Three names will be drawn. This is being provided by Family and Friends Home Care. On November 9th, 9am-1pm, the American Legion is having their coin helmet toss. A few residents have reached out to see if the Township is having a Christmas decorating contest. If anyone would like to enter their home, contact him, Manager Graziano, or Cindy. A resident reached out to him informing him of a way to help lost pets find their way home. It is a chip scanning system, which you can put at any location/public building. Chill on Wheels will be finishing up their ice cream run on November 2nd, 12:30-3pm.

Manager Graziano announced that Representative Ann Flood is hosting a Township cleanup event on November 9th, 10am-12pm.

Supervisor Bermingham announced that Representative Ann Flood is helping with a Special Needs exhibition on November 16th, 10am-1pm at the Forks Township Community Center.

IX.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Recess to Executive Session at 9:17pm to discuss legal matters.

The meeting reconvened at 9:46 pm. Supervisor Bermingham stated that they discussed open space, legal issues with a past bill, and ongoing litigation matters in Executive Session and asked if anyone would like to make a motion. Supervisor Friedman stated our new security company came in and found multiple safety issues and violations that had to be corrected. These were put in place by 21st Century Security. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman that we back charge 21st Century Security \$5,250 to correct safety issues and code violations when they installed certain elements in the security system, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.

Ron Angle asked for an explanation on litigation matters that were discussed. Solicitor Karasek stated this matter deals with the RPL lawsuit that has been filed against the Township and the Supervisors personally and it deals with what was the most recent court decision and what the next steps will be.

X.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Supervisor Bermingham to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 pm, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by Cindy Beck-Recording Secretary