



## Upper Mount Bethel Township

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UPPER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026 – 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 Erler, Supervisor Friedman, Supervisor Albert, Supervisor Eckman, and Township Manager Graziano.

### II.

#### APPROVE THE AGENDA

Supervisor Bermingham amended the agenda, adding PSATS delegation and Resolutions, Part III 1 and 2. **MOTION** by Supervisor Erler to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

### III.

1. PSATS Voting Delegation-Supervisor Bermingham stated that Supervisor Erler was appointed as the PSATS Voting Delegate and will not be able to attend the conference, so a new Voting Delegate will have to be named. Supervisor Bermingham, Supervisor Eckman, and Supervisor Albert will not be able to attend. Supervisor Friedman is attending the conference but will not be able to fill that role. There was a discussion on whether there is a need for one. Supervisor Friedman and Manager Graziano both feel it is more beneficial talking to the vendors. No further action is needed.
2. Resolutions
  - a. Hunter Zeman-Eagle Scout status. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to draft a Resolution for Hunter Zeman, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.

- b. Supervisor Bermingham would like to acknowledge the following people and organizations for all their effort in finding the missing girl from North Bangor, who went missing Thursday evening and was found Friday afternoon.
  - i. Battalion Chief Tommy Austin-Tommy was in charge of the emergency command center that was set up at the North Bangor Fire House.
  - ii. Dan Cole-Dan was Deputy in command, he kept the incident running smoothly.
  - iii. Noah Weidler-Noah was paramount in ensuring all personnel were accounted for, ensuring that no area was missed during the search.
  - iv. North Bangor Fire Department as a whole. They had over a dozen firefighters respond and stayed on the scene from dispatch to when it was cleared the next afternoon.
  - v. Wolfpack Search and Recovery-A volunteer organization who stayed on scene the entire time.
  - vi. Lindsey Manzi-Lindsey was on the scene as our Emergency Management Coordinator, as well as serving 20+ years of service as a firefighter. Lindsey is also the Township's Road Crew Chief and is a great asset to our community.

**MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham for the BOS to draft and adopt the Resolutions stated, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

#### **IV.**

##### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Supervisor Bermingham announced the Electronics Recycle Event will be Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 9am here at the Township building. The Upper Mount Bethel Township community wide yard sale is on April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Supervisor Bermingham and Supervisor Friedman will be having office hours on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 7pm at TK's. The Slate Belt clean-up day is April 18<sup>th</sup> 10am-1pm.

Supervisor Erler would like to clarify a comment he made at the last meeting about the Wild and Scenic. He brought up Tucker vs Columbia and in error, he said that it was in response to a wild and scenic review. The reason he had it listed is because the denial was in the same realm that wild and scenic uses which is adverse effect on scenic values

#### **V.**

##### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Henry Lennihan, Ridge Rd. stated that he supports the Township in joining the Wild and Scenic and the tributaries. He believes being part of something larger, including communities on the New Jersey side of the Delaware, gives us a leg up in the eyes of the Federal Government. As someone once said, "that is where the money is".

Charlie Cole, Riverton Rd., commented on joining Wild and Scenic. Join with our neighbors and cooperate.

Ron Angle, Million Dollar Hwy., stated he does not see the need to join the Wild and Scenic, it's another layer of bureaucracy that will be involved with the Township.

Judy Henckel, Robin Hood Rd., commented on her support to join Wild and Scenic. Judy sees our governance torn between those who value nature's quality of life and others that just see dollar signs. Judy urges the Board to have courage to vote for wild and scenic.

Tom Gilmour, Morningside Dr., commented on the OSAB voted on supporting main stem of the river. Upper Mount Bethel Township is the last township that has not signed on to this. Bureaucracy has not affected Phillipsburg, Easton, LMBT, etc

Joe Battillo, Seminole Terr., stated he was taking a different approach, take the river out of it, lets talk about the Commonwealth of PA. What he loves about the Commonwealth is that he can come to us and talk about problems. If we get involved with the Federal Government, we're not going to have the opportunity to come and talk to them about the river anymore. Joe is urging the Board to understand that it's been working all these years the way we've operated in this township, neighbors helping neighbors, we come together when we need to come together. We really don't know what the rules and regulations are.

Lisa Pektor, RPL, stated they have worked many months to try to understand the Wild and Scenic plans and implications they could have upon their project. Lisa stated that they continue to ask questions of the National Park Service and receive BS answers from the person who was going to be reviewing their applications. Many questions have gone unanswered. Some of the townships that have joined don't really have a lot of development prospects along the river. Lisa implores the Board not to vote on this today or vote it down. They did try to find a middle ground but did not find it.

Anthony DeFranco, Crosshill Dr. stated the nine worse words "I'm here from the Government, how can I help", don't get the Federal Government involved.

Ron Angle, Million Dollar Hwy., stated we don't need bureaucracy, we need good Supervisors to take care of our stuff we need in the township.

Henry Lennihan, Ridge Rd., commented on Government. We have Medicare, Medicaid, FEMA, they have money.

Secretary Cindy Beck read Jeff Ackerman's letter to the Board. Jeff was selected to be the township's representative to the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Management Council. He believes that getting a Wild and Scenic designation has many benefits for the township, no negatives. The Wild and Scenic designation is simply a collective commitment by municipalities along the river to promote goals of the management plan. Protect water quality, protect natural resources, preserve historic resources, encourage responsible recreation, encourage responsible economic development, and open space preservation. Jeff believes that Upper Mount Bethel Township's location on a Wild and

Scenic designated river should be a source of pride for the township and its citizens and businesses.

Supervisor Bermingham asked Tara if we don't vote to join the LDWS designation today, can we decide in the future. Tara stated it can be done again.

Supervisor Eckman asked why after 25 years is it back, why now? Tara explained that a group was looking for more tributaries to join. Tara was at a meeting when asked about other tributaries, her first thought was the Paulinskill. Tara stated that there was a process where other tributaries were studied but not designated.

Supervisor Albert asked if there was a difference between supporting the tributaries or just the main stem. Tara explained. Tara stated that she cannot provide anything quantifiable, it's more of a principal thing.

Supervisor Friedman asked if the tributaries can be put in at a later time. Tara stated that she can't imagine. The answer could be yes.

Supervisor Erler commented on Jeff Ackerman's letter to the BOS and asked Tara for clarification on some of the statements that were made. Portland and Knowlton have already voted that they want to get the designation, if UMBT doesn't join, then they don't get the designation. Tara stated that it is not a true statement. There was a discussion on Section 7, the review, the permits come from the other agencies. Anything in the river will trigger section 7. DEP permit does not trigger section 7 review.

Lou Pektor wanted to make a couple of points. Lou stated that they currently have an approved plan for roughly 8 million sq ft that is vested for industrial. They have spent many years trying to work together and are now looking to do something more beneficial for the township, something that doesn't involve truck traffic. Some questions that were asked were not answered. Lou would like to Board to evaluate their decision because this could affect their ultimate game plan.

Supervisor Bermingham stated that he spoke with John Mauser and he said basically being a part of it helps you for grants. Supervisor Bermingham stated that the township needs ambulance, tax breaks, and garbage bills to be paid, we need a lot of things in this town. To get it, we need to bring in development, and he doesn't want anything to mess up that development. We fought hard to not have warehouses. We potentially have a good deal coming. Supervisor Bermingham stated he does not see enough pros to move forward with this at this time. There was a discussion on whether or not to have Solicitor Karasek's legal opinion.

Manager Graziano asked about road work, there are a lot of failing pipes that exhaust water into the river. Will this be something that will have to be reviewed. Tara stated that they are not reviewing those types of things.

Anthony DeFranco asked about the quarter mile. Tara stated that it is not a quarter mile.

Supervisor Erler read his thoughts. Supervisor Erler stated that he has done extensive research on this and has had multiple meetings with Tara. He had some points he wanted put into the record. 1) This is a permanent designation from the Federal Government. He is for proper small government, and our Commonwealth's practices and constitution. He is fearful it will increase response time in an emergency, mainly pertaining to River Rd. The debacle of the Rt 611 corridor is a simple example of multi-level of governmental oversight. Supervisor Erler stated that he is an advocate for less government involvement and impact on the township and its citizens. 2) this designation was highly contested in the 2000's, 3) de facto prohibitions is a concern, as many, even small projects on private land may still require federal permits, 4) our river is currently healthy with the current oversight, and the last point, 5) the vague determination of affected land of our township from the waterway inland to the high watermark, possibly a quarter mile or more if it's affecting wetlands. With federal involvement and without a clear boundary stated, Supervisor Erler is reluctant to enter into any permanent designation. He will be voting no.

Supervisor Friedman stated that the other municipalities up and down the river surely took a hard look at this, and it did not stop them from joining. There's power in numbers. He will be voting yes.

Supervisor Eckman stated it's just not a good time, there's too many gray areas, and another layer of government we don't need.

Supervisor Bermingham stated that he doesn't feel it's the right time either.

**MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to adopt the Wild and Scenic without the tributaries and cut out the I2-I3 Zone, seconded by Supervisor Albert. Vote: 2-3. Supervisor Bermingham, Supervisor Eckman and Supervisor Erler voted nay.

**VI.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by Cindy Beck, Recording Secretary