



Upper Mount Bethel Township

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UPPER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2026 – 7:00 PM

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

I.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

II.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Supervisor Friedman amended the agenda, moving Executive Session to VIII.

MOTION by Supervisor Friedman to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Supervisor Albert. Vote: 4-0.

III.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Supervisor Erler stated that an Executive Session was held on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, 7:30 pm – 8:29 pm. This was held to go over legal strategy pertaining to 609 Orchard Rd. Solicitor Karasek stated that also discussed was the lawsuit that had been filed either by or against the authority and also discussed were personnel matters.

IV. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Supervisor Albert announced that he met with both Fire Companies to work on the tax credit. He is finalizing the wording and will meet with them again soon. Once reviewed by the Fire Companies Representatives, Solicitor Karasek will then review it.

Supervisor Eckman announced the 4th of July event at the Park. We are still looking for vendors.

Manager Graziano reminded everyone of the bulk pickup process. Pickup is every other Friday and you must call in to schedule. Tonight's meeting is being live streamed on Facebook and YouTube. Manager Graziano is still working with United Way, a program to assist seniors, low-income families, disabled, etc. This program is for Upper Mount Bethel Township residents only. A contract has been put together and Solicitor Karasek is reviewing. Office hours for the summer, M-T, 6am-4pm. Closed Fridays. May 23rd 9am-noon, electronics recycling event here at the Township.

Supervisor Erler reminded everyone the Chairs to the Table meeting is on Monday, May 18th and is open to the public.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Charles Baltic, Township Resident, commented on the LERTA. The County is looking to rescind the LERTA. Charles stated that this will be on County Council's meeting agenda on May 21st and feels it is important that UMBT makes a statement. This program expires in 2027.

Manny Vidal, Township Resident, asked for an update on the Stine matter. Supervisor Erler stated this is on the agenda for an update.

Judy Henckel, Township Resident, commented on the Dr. Larry Rymon Memorial Statute and his dedication to the Osprey, writing papers and doing studies.

Fran Visicaro, Township Resident, asked Supervisor Erler if he knows what the LERTA is. Supervisor Erler stated yes, he does. Fran stated that data centers do not need help.

Ron Angle, Township Resident, stated that the LERTA is up in 2027 and we should take advantage of it, not necessarily for RPL, but for any business opportunities. Ron commented on the CBA. The township has well-qualified residents that are more than capable of negotiating a CBA for the citizens of the township.

VI.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. April 8, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes
2. April 13, 2026, Meeting Minutes
3. April 27, 2026, WS Meeting Minutes
4. Exonerations/Refunds

MOTION by Supervisor Friedman to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Vote: 4-0.

VII.

FINANCIALS

1. Bill List-Manger Graziano read the bill list totaling \$208,638.33. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to pay the bills in the amount of \$208,638.33, seconded by Supervisor Albert. Vote: 4-0.

VIII.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Recess to Executive Session at 7:30 pm to discuss personnel contract.

The meeting reconvened at 7:42 pm.

Supervisor Erler stated that a personnel contract was discussed in Executive Session.

IX.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Resolution No. 2026-11 Victoria Parks Gold Star Award-Supervisor Erler read Resolution No. 2026-11, whereas Victoria Parks achieved the "Gold Star" award, which is the highest award a Girl Scout can bestow. Victoria's project focused on building wooden doghouse donation boxes and placing them at local businesses. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to adopt Resolution No. 2026-11, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Vote: 4-0.
2. Preserve Permit Bills-Manager Graziano stated they are preparing to obtain permits for the preserve. The following checks are required 1) filing fee of \$1,500 payable to NCCD/Clean Water Fund, 2) Service Fee of \$21, 775 payable to NCCD, and Disturbed Acreage Fee of \$2,100 payable to Commonwealth of PA/Clean Water Fund. Total of \$25,375, which will come out of Open Space Fund. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to pay \$25,375 for permitting at the Preserve, seconded by Supervisor Albert. Vote: 4-0.
3. Larry Rymon Memorial Statute-Manager Graziano stated that Holly Rymon requested for the Osprey Statute to be placed temporarily at the base of the flag at the park and possibly moved to the lookout at the Preserve in the future. She would like to have a ceremony at the Park on August 22nd.
4. IT Services-Supervisor Erler stated the IT contract is set to expire on May 22nd and asked if the Board would like to renew it on the same terms. **MOTION** by Supervisor Albert to renew the IT contract on the same terms, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Vote: 3-1.

X.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Tom Nelson ATV's-**MOTION** by Supervisor Albert to table, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 4-0.
2. Stine Update-Solicitor Karasek stated this was discussed in executive session and everyone was reminded that there is a June bench trial in Northampton County, which deals with the earlier issues of the burning, the disposal of construction waste and debris on the site, failing to clean up the site, and things of that nature. There have been current issues that have occurred in which the zoning officer issued an enforcement or a violation letter on May 4th and then issued an enforcement notice. If Mr. Stine received the notice, he has 30 days to appeal to the Zoning Hearing Board. If he does not file an appeal, then he is conclusively presumed to be in violation and upon direction from BOS, he could prepare another injunction to be filed in Northampton County Court. Supervisor Friedman asked if the driveway issue has been addressed. Manager Graziano stated yes, a letter was sent on April 29th by Engineer Coyle. Solicitor Karasek stated that DEP through Attorney Stull and other individuals are attempting to arrange a site visit within the next week or two to see what has been going on since the last visit. Engineer Coyle stated that he looked at the situation and found they installed an unpermitted driveway. There were site distance issues with the driveway, there is no guarantee the permit is going to be approved. Based on the disturbance of over an acre of earth on the site, it looks like he may need a permit from DEP for NPDS permit, and a grading plan. Manny Vidal expressed his frustration with the situation. Supervisor Erler stated it is a process but we will continue to seek action against him. Mr. Vidal stated that Mr. Stine is looking to put in 11 greenhouses, water tanks, two custom made wood burning furnaces. Marie Ricker asked is the property in question zoned commercial for a business or is it agricultural. Is it allowed to put greenhouses up and sell products? Manager Graziano stated that he believes it is zoned residential/ag. Mr. Stine can farm it. Manager Graziano stated that this also involves Mr. Czopoth, the property owner, who knows that Mr. Stine is not supposed to be there.
3. CBA Guidelines-Supervisor Erler stated the CBA will be one of the main points that will be discussed at the Chairs to the table meeting next week to see where the Township wants to be in the next 30 years and the tools needed to get there. Supervisor Erler stated that we have not negotiated the price or anything of the CBA. Supervisor Erler asked if any of the Supervisors would like to add any input. Supervisor Erler stated that he would like to see the longevity of anything on the CBA being from 10-30 years, anything that would be multi-use to benefit multiple aspects of any/all of our residents, reducing or eliminating cost to our tax base, anything that could be supplemented or eliminated, things that require a one-time cost to assure that we can get that benefit when any contract or when anything is due. Supervisor Erler would like to see the major items first, large scale to be done, not to have any effect on township obligations, to add nothing to the future cost to maintain. Supervisor Eckman stated that it would be nice if all the supervisors actually got to meet with and attended some of the meetings

before we even discussed the CBA. Supervisor Eckman and Supervisor Albert have not with them or attended any of the meetings. Supervisor Eckman stated that we should wait and see what they bring to the table. Supervisor Erler stated that he agrees with Supervisor Eckman, that all the Supervisors should be involved, but he knows that Supervisor Friedman previously mentioned that he does not want to part of the negotiations. Supervisor Friedman stated that we should have a consultant there, where Lisa Pektor agreed with him. He said that he doesn't have to be part of the negotiations, but he should be able to sit there and see what's going on. Supervisor Friedman stated that no effort has been made to contact three of the Supervisors. Supervisor Erler stated that he has provided the three Supervisors who were not able to attend the meeting, a synopsis of what was discussed and asked if they had anything they would like to add. Manager Graziano stated that he would like to be fully transparent with our Township. There was an email that was sent out to Supervisor Eckman and Supervisor Albert, which he was copied on, inviting them to be introduced to Julie. Supervisor Albert stated that he did receive it on Friday. Manager Graziano stated that they are willing to meet at different times/venues. Supervisor Friedman has met Julie personally. Manager Graziano stated full disclosure, Supervisor Bermingham and Supervisor Friedman had office hours, in which Julie attended, Judy Henckel was there as well, they are reaching out to everyone, they are not hiding. Supervisor Friedman stated the gist of that meeting was Wild and Scenic, the CBA was not discussed. Supervisor Erler stated that once they are ready and all Supervisors have met, they will eventually do a presentation to the township. Supervisor Eckman stated, regardless of the CBA, with the sale of any end user, it will continuously be bringing money into the township. Supervisor Albert stated that he doesn't care if it's a third party or if it's a committee of residents, we do need some kind of consultant. Supervisor Erler asked if any of the Board members would like to continue using the consultant that we attempted to use last time when the deal fell through. Supervisor Erler would like to put Consultant Discussion on the June 8th meeting agenda.

XI.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Park Foundation-Supervisor Erler stated that at the last meeting, we asked Solicitor Karasek to look into Ron Angle's proposal of having a forensic audit done on the Park Foundation. Solicitor Karasek stated that a suit was filed by the BOS on October 2023. Solicitor Karasek filed a petition for discovery in aid of preparation of pleadings. In 2022, the Foundation changed its name and deleted the word Park. In November of 2022, Mr. Teel and others continued to ask for financial information and other documents. On January 12, 2023, he was directed by the Board of Supervisors to terminate that lawsuit which he did. It is his belief that the Statute of Limitations is 2 years, with that, he does not recommend furthering any lawsuit. Ron Angle, stated that there is one person sitting on the Board who made the vote to drop the whole thing. Ron states that

he still believes we can have a forensic accountant do an audit. He will deliver a check for \$10,000 to Manager Graziano to begin. Solicitor Karasek will verify if this can be done. Ron stated that the township originally gave the Foundation \$10k of taxpayer monies so he does believe we have a standing. Supervisor Friedman stated that the Attorney General looked at this and found nothing. Supervisor Erler stated that when he read the statement at the end of it, it said there was a lack of information given. Supervisor Friedman stated that the \$10k could be put to better use. Marty Pinter stated that he was on the Board that started the lawsuit because they wanted an audit trail. The only bank accounts that were given for the lawyer to look at was the current one at that time. There were three banks associated with the Foundation, the other two were not audited. That was the discovery we were asking Solicitor Karasek to get.

X.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fran Visicaro stated that she would like the list that the EAC came up with for the CBA to review so it is not duplicated.

Judy Henckel stated that she is tired of hearing about the Foundation. Judy just feels as though they were not good record keepers. Supervisor Erler stated this is about accountability.

Chris Finan pleaded with the Board to please not use the last consultant we used. He steered him and the people of this township in the wrong direction.

Charles Baltic commented on the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Maybe the township could consider a commemorative plaque to put up at the park. If the Board chooses to consider that, he would be willing to head the effort in getting donations for it.

Ron Angle commented on accountability and the CBA, which should be done for the long haul, if done properly, could make things a lot better for the people in Upper Mt. Bethel.

X.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Supervisor Friedman to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 pm, seconded by Supervisor Albert. Vote: 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted by Cindy Beck, Recording Secretary