

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 2, 2026

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on February 2, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. in the meeting room of Township Hall, 2600 Bayshore Road, Villas, New Jersey.

The Clerk announced that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided according to law.

The following members of Council were present for roll call taken by the Clerk:

Councilmember Thomas Conrad  
Councilmember Joseph Wareham  
Councilmember Roland Roy, Jr.  
Deputy Mayor Kevin Coombs  
Mayor Frank Sippel

Also present: Michael Laffey, Township Manager, Robert Belasco, Township Solicitor and Karen Fournier, Deputy Township Clerk

### Work Session

State of the Township Address – Mayor Sippel

Chris South, Cape May County Herald, inquired about Cannabis Tax, Occupancy Tax and Bathrooms at Douglass Park.

### Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – January 21, 2026

Approval of New Jersey State Firefighter's Association Membership – D Brown III, Town Bank Vol. Fire Company

Res. #2026-74 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$667,710.54

Res. #2026-75 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (A. Cushman, \$7,435.12)

Res. #2026-76 Approval of 2026 Rotary Towing Licenses

Res. #2026-77 Public Facilities Grant Application for \$400,000, ADA Accessibility

Res. #2026-78 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (T. Girard, \$5,670.86)

Res. #2026-79 Bid Acceptance and Contract Award for the FY2024 NJDCA Small Cities Program Municipal Pool Building Replacement (LT-C-063)

Res. #2026-80 Adoption of State Model Citizen Participation Plan for DCA Small Cities Program

Res. #2026-81 Identifying Small Cities Fair Housing Officer

Res. #2026-82 Approval of Public Facilities Grant Management Plan

Res. #2026-83 A Resolution Authorizing the Adoption of the 2026 Cape May County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Res. #2026-84 A Resolution Amending Confirmation of Officials for Joint Insurance Fund and Municipal Excess Liability Fund

Res. #2026-85 Authorizing Pay Out of Terminal Leave (C. Crippen, \$36,559.94)

Res. #2026-86 Authorizing Pay Out of Terminal Leave (M. Vitelli, \$11,897.68)

Res. #2026-87 Authorizing Pay Out of Terminal Leave (K. Wolf, \$5,603.23)

Res. #2026-88 Approving A Professional Service Contract with Blauer Associates for the Application Submission and Administrative Work for FY2026 Small Cities Project (NTE \$20,000)

Res. #2026-89 Approval of Change Order #1 Authorizing Additional Services for State Contract to Insight Public Sector for the Provisions of OpenGov Software and Related Services for Online Bid Procurement (Contract No. T3121)

Res. #2026-90 A Resolution Approving the Renewal of a Class 5 Cannabis License to Sea & Leaf, LLC

Ord. #2026-02 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 7, Traffic, of the Code of the Township of Lower to Explicitly Prohibit Parking in Front of Public or Private Driveways, Driveway Aprons, Curb Cuts, Or Access Points. This is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and public hearing has been scheduled for March 2, 2026.

On the Consent:

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD		X	X				
WAREHAM	X		X				
ROY			X				
COOMBS			X				
SIPPEL			X				

Public Comment – no comments

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad commented on the extreme cold temperatures and reminded residents to check on their neighbors.

Councilmember Wareham commended Mayor Sippel and staff on the State of the Township Address.

Councilmember Roy – no comments

Deputy Mayor Coombs – no comments

Mayor Sippel voiced favor on the latest storm preparations and thanked the Department of Public Works for a great job plowing the streets.

Manager Laffey commended Public Works and commented on the positive feedback about plowing the roads.

Closed Session

Res. #2026-91 A Resolution Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 Attorney-Client Privilege

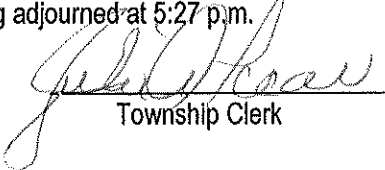
**MOTION TO TABLE**

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD	X		X				
WAREHAM			X				
ROY			X				
COOMBS		X	X				
SIPPEL			X				

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Conrad, seconded by Deputy Mayor Coombs. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

  
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Frank Sippel, Mayor

  
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Township Clerk

Approved: FEB 18, 2026