

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – October 20, 2025

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on October 20, 2025 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 and Karen Fournier, Deputy Township Clerk

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – October 6, 2025

Res. #2025-343 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$ 683,599.92

Res. #2025-344 Certification of Best Practices Inventory

Res. #2025-345 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (W.Omrod \$3,837.60)

Res. #2025-346 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (K.Walker \$14,126.84)

Res. #2025-347 Approval of Contribution to Lower Township Chamber of Commerce

Res. #2025-348 Approval of Change Order #1 to Phoenix Advisors for Municipal Advisory Services in connection with General Improvement Bonds

Res. #2025-349 A Resolution Authorizing a Memorandum of Agreement between the Township of Lower and the County of Cape May regarding Code Blue Warming Centers

Res. #2025-350 Insertion of Special Item of Revenue Pursuant to NJSA40A:4-87, Chapter 159 (NJ Green Acres \$750,000)

Res. #2025-351 Approval for Cape May Hallowed Half Marathon

Res. #2025-352 Authorizing Pay Out of Terminal Leave (L.Read \$6,300.85)

Res. #2025-353 Approval of Change Order #2 for Remington & Vernick Engineers Services for an Environmental Report for the HVAC Replacement Project at the Township of Lower Municipal Building and Construction & Zoning Building

Mayor Sippel shared information about Res. #2025-349 with regard to the Code Blue warming centers.

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

Regular Agenda

Res. #2025-354 A Resolution to Terminate All Participation Under the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) Including Drug Plan and/or Dental Plan Coverage

Mayor Sippel communicated the urgency in passing this resolution prior to the end of October to save the Township from a 36.9% cost increase in State Health Benefits.

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

Res. #2025-355 A Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract to Amerihealth for Health Insurance Coverage for the Township of Lower as an Extraordinary Unspecifiable Service

Mayor Sippel asked Manager Laffey to explain the process.

Manager Laffey explained the current health insurance situation and the factors involved with establishing coverage. He also communicated the Township's obligation to secure the best and most reasonable plan for employees and taxpayers.

Councilmember Wareham commented in favor of his current coverage with Amerihealth through the County.

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

Res. #2025-356 A Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Contract to Braven Health for Prescription Coverage for Retired Employees for the Township of Lower as an Extraordinary Unspecifiable Service

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

Engineer Report

Andrew McTague, DeBlasio and Associates, gave Council an update on the following engineering projects being handled by DeBlasio and Associates: Rotary Community Park Renovations, Bay Outfall Extensions, Reconstruction of Ridgewood Ave., Stormwater GIS Mapping Services, David Douglass Sr. Memorial Park Renovations, Lower Township Public Works Building Design, Holmes, Gorham and Scott Avenues Storm Sewer & Roadway Improvement Project, Lower Township Municipal Pool Building, Reconstruction of Beach Ave., Resurfacing of Cardinal Ave., Bayshore Road Pickleball Courts, Clem Mulligan Sports Complex Storm Sewer Pump Station, and Lincoln Blvd. and Arctic Ave. Storm Sewer Replacement.

Administrative Reports

Clerk, Dog, Vital

Public Comment

Joanne Rietheimer, 111 Pinewood Road, addressed Council regarding her proposal to install children's little libraries on Township playgrounds.

Manager Laffey informed Ms. Rietheimer that more research is needed before a determination can be made.

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad – no comments

Councilmember Wareham gave an update on Townbank Road paving project and thanked the County for making it a priority.

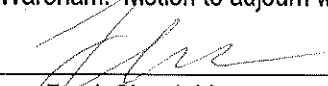
Councilmember Roy – no comments

Deputy Mayor Coombs voiced favor with Townbank Road improvements.

Mayor Sippel announced the following events: Haunted Trails and Veteran's Day Parade.

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Mayor Sippel, seconded by Councilmember Wareham. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.


Frank Sippel, Mayor

Approved:


Deputy Township Clerk