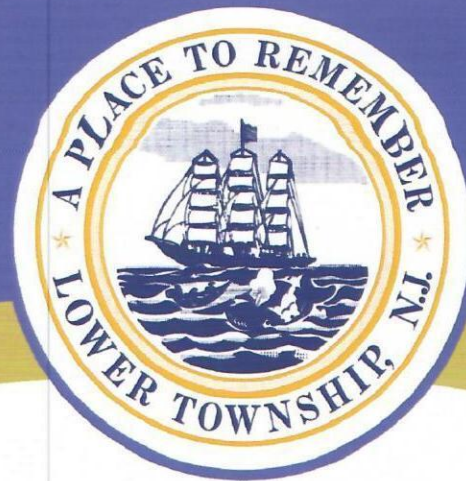


LOWER TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026



FROM THE COUNCIL...

As I reflect on the past year and a half, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the residents of Lower Township and proud of what we have accomplished together as a community. Through careful planning, teamwork, and a commitment to fiscal responsibility, Council has continued to make improvements that benefit our residents, support our first responders, and enhance the experience of the many visitors who enjoy our community.

One project I was especially proud to work on alongside the Recreation Advisory Board and Council was the development of our new pickleball courts. This initiative has created a valuable recreational amenity for our residents and is quickly becoming a popular gathering place for people of all ages.

In coordination with the County Commissioners, I also worked to advance the repaving of Townbank Road ahead of the planned schedule. This project was critical not only for our residents, but for the safety and efficiency of our first responders, including the Townbank Volunteer Fire Company, who depend on that roadway every time they respond to an emergency.

Another important effort involved working with Council and our Township Manager to upgrade and repair our bay entrances, including improvements to the entranceway on Wildwood Avenue. This location is in the process of being designated as a primary access point for Fire District One and our emergency services. These upgrades will not only help accommodate the growing number of residents and visitors enjoying our increasingly popular bayfront, but they also enhance public safety by improving access for first responders.

In addition, we currently have eight major infrastructure projects underway throughout the Township. At the same time, we successfully negotiated and settled new collective bargaining agreements with our employees that pay them a competitive wage, while navigating significant financial challenges.

Those challenges included a 19.5% increase in healthcare costs, as well as substantial increases in our annual electricity expenses. Despite these pressures, Council remained focused and disciplined in its approach.

As a result of that teamwork and commitment to sound financial management, we were able to meet these challenges while maintaining a 0% municipal tax increase for 2026. In fact, Lower Township has maintained the 19th lowest average tax bill in the State of New Jersey over the past five years- this is out of all 564 municipalities in the State!

These are just a few examples of what we have accomplished together. None of this happens alone, it requires collaboration, dedication, and a shared commitment to serving our community.

We truly live in a remarkable place, and I am grateful to have been a part of these improvements to our community. With these done, it is time to look forward and focus on what we can accomplish together next.

-Joseph Wareham
Council Member

SPRING

STARTING APRIL 6, 2026

CAPEWOODS, FISHING CREEK RD, BAYGARDENS, SCHOONER LANDING, BREAKWATER RD, (FISHING CREEK RD TO BAYSHORE RD), MICKELS RUN, BAYSHORE WOODS, BAYWOOD PARK, HOLLY ESTATES, KECEMECHE 1 AND 2, LENNOX ACRES, RABBIT RUN, BAYSHORE EAST, TOWNBANK RD (SHERIFF TAYLOR BLVD TO BAYSHORE RD), BREAKWATER ESTATES

STARTING APRIL 20, 2026

TOWNBANK (TAHOE DRIVE TO TOWNBANK RD), CAPE MAY BEACH, NORTH CAPE MAY, BAYSHORE ESTATES, BAYSHORE RD (BREAKWATER RD TO LINCOLN BLVD), BAYSHORE WEST, TOWNBANK RD (BAYSHORE RD TO BEACH DRIVE).



STARTING MAY 4, 2026

WEST VILLAS-MIAMI AVENUE TO SHADELAND AVENUE, BAYSIDE VILLAGE, SHAMMOUNT AVENUE.

STARTING MAY 18, 2026

EAST VILLAS-MIAMI AVENUE TO LOWER TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING.

STARTING JUNE 1, 2026

RT #9 (CHURCH STREET TO TRANQUILITY PARK), SCHELLENGER'S LANDING, DIAMOND BEACH, SOUTH OF CANAL, JONATHAN HOFFMAN RD, SHAWCREST, BREAKWATER RD (FISHING CREEK RD TO SEASHORE RD), SHUNPIKE RD, TABERNAACLE RD, SEASHORE RD, TOWNBANK RD (SHERIFF TAYLOR BLVD. TO SEASHORE RD), ERMA PARK, AND COLDSRING.



Leaves must be loose curbside. Not bagged.
Branches up to 7' in length no larger than 6" in diameter.
Placed curbside one week before your scheduled time. 609-884-0898



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Deputy Mayor
KCombs@townshipoflower.org



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Joseph Wareham
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Roland Roy
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Michael Laffey
Manager
Manager@townshipoflower.org

MANAGER'S ANNUAL BUDGET MESSAGE

2026 BUDGET INTRODUCTION – MARCH 2, 2026

Council has received a copy of the proposed municipal budget for 2026 and I'm pleased to announce there is no tax rate increase. The tax levy is:

\$24,016,289.12 compared to last year's \$23,874,081.49; an increase of \$142,207.63.

Our Assessed Valuation increased by: \$25,019,510

We're below the Legal Levy Cap by: \$568,193

and below the Legal spending Cap by: \$355,811.30

The Township completed 2025 with a surplus of: \$10,691,503; the highest year-end surplus balance to date.

The increase is largely due to new revenues brought in by occupancy taxes, interest earnings and Construction Code Fees. The tax collection rate for 2025 was 98.86% which helped add over \$1.278M to

the surplus. All other revenue collections exceeded projections for 2025 and brought in an additional \$1.25M.

Of that surplus balance \$5,404,315.64 is being applied to this year's budget to help us keep the tax rate level. We feel confident using this amount of surplus because we're well within the parameters of our fund balance policy.

The total Assessed Valuation of Real Property is:

\$3,794,140,600 so approximately every \$379,414 of the Amount to be Raised by Taxation equals one cent on the tax rate.

This budget uses a 97.75% rate to compute the Reserve for Uncollected Taxes in 2026.

The public hearing is scheduled for April 20th at 5:00 p.m. A budget summary will be published in the Cape May Star & Wave. Copies will be available on the Township website as well as in the Clerk's office at Townhall.

LOWER TOWNSHIP HONORS WINTER SPORTS TEAMS

Lower Township recently recognized the exceptional accomplishments of student-athletes from Lower Cape May Regional High School during a Township Council meeting, celebrating a historic winter sports season marked by top level performances, record-breaking achievements, and individual excellence.

Champions, Gator Beast Champions, Williamstown Duals Champions, Cinnaminson Duals Champions, and Cape May County Champions. The team also claimed the South Jersey Group II Championship, District 32 Championship, and advanced to the first State Final appearance in school history. They finished the season ranked #4 in South Jersey, #19 in New Jersey, and #2 in New Jersey Group II.

Coaching accolades for the wrestling program included Dennis Elia being named District 32 Assistant Coach of the Year, and Billy Damiana earning both District 32 and Region 8 Coach of the Year honors.

Lower Township mayor and council commended the dedication, sportsmanship, and hard work demonstrated by all student-athletes and coaches, noting that these achievements bring pride and recognition to the entire Lower Township community.

Lower Township extends its congratulations to all of the teams and student-athletes for an extraordinary winter sports season and looks forward to their continued success in the future.

The Lower Cape May Regional Boys Basketball team delivered an impressive 23-6 season, earning the National Conference Championship. Head Coach Scott Holden reached a significant milestone, securing his 200th career win. Several players received conference honors, including Ty Bonner and John Fernandez, who were both named First Team Cape Atlantic League (CAL) All-Stars. Ryan Mallon earned CAL All-Star Honorable Mention recognition, while Gavin Ridgeway, Cole Sederland, Joe Wareham, and Jose Ramos contributed to the team's standout season.

The Lower Cape May Regional Football team also had a remarkable year, finishing with an 8-3 record and capturing the South Jersey Group 2 Liberty Division Championship. The team made history by earning its first playoff win. Head Coach Billy Damiana was named Liberty Division Coach of the Year.

Individual honors included First Team CAL All-Star selections for Will Garoh, Cole Cooper, Ryan Mallon, Jonathan Fernandez, Jadon Henry, Max Bracken, and Jonathan Dupree. David Douglass and Alex Nelson were recognized with CAL All-Star Honorable Mention.

The Lower Cape May Regional Wrestling team achieved one of the most successful seasons in program history, earning multiple tournament championships including Vineland Tournament

REMINDERS

Lower Township Council Meetings will be held on the first and third Mondays of each month, beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the meeting room of Lower Township Hall, located at 2600 Bayshore Road, unless otherwise noted. For a complete list of meeting dates and times, visit the township website at: TownshipofLower.org.

All dogs over the age of six months shall be required to be licensed, and a license for same shall be obtained and attached to the harness or collar of each dog prior to January 31 of each and every year.

Looking for township forms, helpful links, tax payment portal, want to make a suggestion, contact a certain department or report a pothole? Visit the township website at: townshipoflower.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 28, 11:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
EASTER EGG HUNT - SPRING FLING
FREEMAN DOUGLASS PARK

MAY 22, 5:30 P.M.
SUMMER KICK OFF - FAMILY FUN NIGHT
CLEM MULLIGAN PARK

MAY 30, 8:30 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.
LOWER TOWNSHIP HEALTHY YOUTH COALITION BEACH CLEAN
DAVID DOUGLASS MEMORIAL AND TOWNBANK BEACHES

JUNE 6, 9 A.M. - NOON
SHRED DAY
LOWER TOWNSHIP HALL 2600 BAYSHORE ROAD

JUNE 7
ESCAPE THE CAPE
LOWER TOWNSHIP BAYFRONT

ONGOING EVENTS

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAY 9:00 A.M - 1:00 P.M.
OPEN PLAY PICKLE BALL

EVERY THURSDAY AT 6:00 P.M.
ADULT YOGA
MILLMAN CENTER

EVERY MONDAY FROM 7:30 P.M.- 9:30 P.M.
ADULT NIGHT
RECREATION CENTER

ALL EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE OR CANCELLATION

Township of Lower
2600 Bayshore Road, Villas, NJ 08251
609-886-2005
<https://townshipoflower.org/>

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

LOWER TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING - (609) 886-2005
LOWER TOWNSHIP RECREATION DEPARTMENT - (609) 886-7880
POLICE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER - (609) 886-1619
TO MAKE A POLICE REPORT: CAPE MAY COUNTY DISPATCH - (609) 886-2771
FOR ANIMAL CONTROL: SHORE ANIMAL CONTROL - 1 (800) 351-1822
MUA OFFICE - (609) 886-7146
MUA EMERGENCY - (609) 780-0101

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Advisories, Local News and Events via:**
Phone Call, Text, Email or Mobile App



Set your messaging preferences when you register.
Download the Smart911 app after registering.

Sign Up at Police, Township or MUA websites
If you need assistance with registering, contact the Township Clerk's office at 609-886-2005, extension 100, between 8:30 am & 4:30 pm

LT Alerts is Replacing Nixle
Nixle messages will end on 6-30-22

SPRING 2026