

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – August 18, 2025

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on August 18, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the 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
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

Presentation - Certificates of Congratulations – Lower Township Elementary School System Retirees
Deputy Mayor Coombs, on behalf of Mayor and Council, presented certificates of congratulations to Rich Hooyman and John Champion, retirees from Lower Township Elementary School (LTES).
Van Cathcart, Superintendent of LTES, thanked Council for acknowledging LTES retirees and looks forward to further collaboration with the Township.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – August 4, 2025

Approval of New Jersey State Firefighter's Association Membership – Z. Shapiro, Erma Volunteer Fire Company

Res. #2025-278 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$ 248,793.86

Res. #2025-279 Authorization for the Payout of Accumulated Compensatory Time (S. Elam Hampton \$1,587.37)

Res. #2025-280 Authorization for the Waiver of Permitting Fees for Naval Air Station Wildwood, Associated with the Access Control Upgrades to the Museum's Fencing and Gates

Res. #2025-281 Insertion of Special Item of Revenue Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87; Chapter 159 (Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over \$5,250)

Res. #2025-282 Approving a Professional Service Contract with Phoenix Advisors for Municipal Advisory Services in Connection with General Improvement Bonds

Res. #2025-283 Approving Change Order #1 with Ford Scott & Associates, LLC to Assist with the Proposed Issuance of Bonds for the Township of Lower (NTE \$12,700.)

Res. #2025-284 A Resolution Ratifying and Affirming a Memorandum of Understanding between the Lower Township Police Department and Acenda, Inc. in Connection with the Arrive Together Program Focused on Enhancing and Supporting Law Enforcement Responses to Certain Behavioral Health Crisis Calls

Res. #2025-285 Bid Acceptance and Contract Award for the Delaware Bay Beach Stormwater Outfall Extension Project (LT-C-059) to R.A. Walters & Sons (\$296,000)

Res. #2025-286 Under 3% Emergency Resolution to Facilitate the Award of a Professional Service Contract to Address Compliance with Affordable Housing Obligation

Res. #2025-287 Insertion of Special Item of Revenue Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87, Chapter 159 (OEM Perf Grant \$10,000)

Res. #2025-288 A Resolution Awarding a Professional Service Contract without Public Bidding to Lomax Consulting Group to Provide Environmental Consulting Services

Res. #2025-289 A Resolution of the Township of Lower Canceling Certain Taxes per Agreement/Resolution

Res. #2025-290 Approval of Change Order #1 to DeBlasio & Associates, Inc. for the Construction Phase for the Bay Outfalls Extension (LT-C-059 \$18,000.)

Res. #2025-291 A Resolution Authorizing a Request for funds from the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority

Res. #2025-292 A Resolution Urging the New Jersey Governor and Legislature to Enact Regulations Governing the Operation of Electric Bicycles and Scooters on Public Streets, Sidewalks, Bike Paths and Other Public Areas to Enhance Public Safety

Res. #2025-293 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Right of Entry Agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to Facilitate the Cape May Canal Improvement Project

Mayor Sippel commented on Resolution #2025-292 and stressed the importance of enhancing public safety with regard to electric bikes and scooters.
Solicitor Belasco communicated the statutes regarding electric bikes and the ability for municipalities to regulate and/or restrict e-bikes in public parks.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	RECUSE	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD		X	X				
WAREHAM			X				
ROY							X
COOMBS	X		X				
SIPPEL			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., MS4 Compliance, Resurfacing of Cardinal Ave., Bayshore Road Pickleball Courts, and Clem Mulligan Sports Complex Storm Sewer Pump Station.

Mayor Sippel inquired about the status of the Open Space grant for David Douglass Sr. Memorial Park. Manager Laffey confirmed the grant approval.

Administrative Reports

Clerk, Construction, Dog, Tax, Vital

Public Comment

James Harveson, 25 Cedarbrook Road, addressed Council regarding the DRBA's proposed Hotel and the possibility of a redevelopment plan.

Solicitor Belasco addressed Mr. Harveson's concerns.

Jim Pomponi, 111 E Richmond Ave., voiced concern about the width of Richmond Avenue and suggested Council's consideration to make it a one-way street. He also expressed concern about a depression in the street.

Mayor Sippel directed Mr. Laffey to look into the matter and communicated the Township's commitment to evaluate streets and parking in Diamond Beach.

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad complimented the Rec Department on the Summer Concert Series and reminded about Family Fun Night.

Councilmember Wareham gave an update on the Town Bank Road repaving project and congratulated LTES retirees.

Deputy Mayor Coombs congratulated Van Cathcart on his recent promotion and congratulated LTES retirees.

Mayor Sippel congratulated LTES retirees and reminded about the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony.

Adjourn

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Wareham, seconded by Deputy Mayor Combs. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.


Frank Sippel, Mayor


Township Clerk

Approved: 