

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – August 3, 2026

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on August 3, 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 Amy Belasco, Deputy Township Clerk

Work Session

Presentation – Deputy Manager, Christina Lewis, gave a power point presentation on the benefits of having a Shared Court with Middle Township and Wildwood Crest.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – July 20, 2026

Res. #2026-264 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$990,379.13

Res. #2026-265 Reappointment to the Planning Board (R. Roach, Jr.)

Res. #2026-266 Bid Acceptance and Contract Award for Judge Nathaniel Foster House Phase 2 (DKC Contractors LLC, \$169,035.)

Res. #2026-267 Approving a Professional Service Contract with DeBlasio & Associates to Prepare and Submit an Application for the FY2027 Clean Water Beverly Road Storm Sewer Replacement Project (LT-C-078)

Res. #2026-268 A Resolution Authorizing and Approving the Renewal of a Shared Service Agreement Between the Township of Lower and the Township of Middle for Shared Municipal Court Administrator Services

Res. #2026-269 Authorization for Refund of Taxes

Res. #2026-270 A Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Declaration of Encumbrance and Certification of the Recreation and Open Space Inventory in Connection with the Green Acres-Funded Jake's Law Playground at Rotary Park Project

Res. #2026-271 Approval of Change Order #1 Final to South State Inc. for the Reconstruction of Beach Avenue and Delaware Avenue (Spruce to Frances)

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

Regular Agenda

Ord. #2026-14 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 7, Traffic, Article I, General Provisions, of the Code of the Township of Lower. This is the second reading and public hearing of this Ordinance. This Ordinance has been posted, published and made available to the public.

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

Ord. #2026-15 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 400, Land Development, and Chapter 432, Mercantile Licenses, of the Code of the Township of Lower to Increase the Maximum Number of Class 5 Cannabis Retail Licenses from Two to Three. This is the second reading and public hearing of this Ordinance. This Ordinance has been posted, published and made available to the public.

Kelly Scardone, 227 E Raleigh Ave, asked about the location where the proposed cannabis licenses will go and who is requesting them.

Solicitor Belasco informed that there are specific zones in which the cannabis license can be used and explained which areas of the Township are currently zoned for said use.

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

Administrative Reports

Tax

Call to the Public

Mayor Sippel reminded of the intent of and conduct expected during Public Comment.

Angela Clarke, 903 Rosehill Parkway, stated she was appreciative of the infrastructure upgrades within the Township; however, she expressed concerns over the current water project in North Cape May in which there's a staging area outside of her home. She expressed displeasure with the loud noises, dirt and construction. She requested the Township arrange a new staging area.

Gary Jacques, 43 Birch Rd, addressed Council about issues with Short-term Rentals causing disturbances due to people coming and going, and pointed out there are 5-6 vacation rentals registered on his block. He suggested raising the occupancy tax to 5% and asked Council to take into consideration having a minimum rental period.

Matthew Salasin, 48 Croydon Dr, addressed Mayor and Council with concerns about Flock Cameras and the discrepancies with them. He requested Mayor and Council consider removing them from the Township.

David & Lisa De Shields, 901 Rose Hill Parkway, expressed concerns with dust and debris from the water main project by their home in North Cape May. They also voiced concern about public safety in that area, as cars are speeding up and down Rose Hill and missing the stop sign and requested some type of radar detection.

Manager Laffey pointed out that the water main project in North Cape May is a MUA project and agreed to reach out to the MUA to address some of these concerns.

Ted Rose, 212 E Raleigh Ave, expressed concerns about speeding in Diamond Beach due to people coming off the bridge on Pacific Ave and suggested some type of traffic calming measure in that area.

Umberto Parrotta, 400 E Raleigh Ave, thanked Deputy Manager Lewis for the presentation on shared Court and asked where the judge will be selected from as well as the cost savings for the shared services. Lastly, he requested the stop sign at the corner of 400 E Raleigh Ave be cleared of brush and trees.

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad commented on the public access at Village Rd and said they're working on the Emergency access. He also commented on the concert series going very well.

Councilmember Wareham commented on the confusion with Township Roads vs. County Roads and said he asked the County for a current list and status of all County Road projects. He also commended the Recreation Department for a great job with the Coombs-Douglas Run.

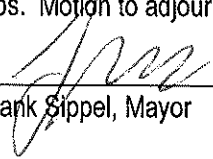
Councilmember Roy recommended that house numbers be clearly displayed on properties so emergency vehicles can easily identify them.

Deputy Mayor Coombs commended the Public Works Department on a great job fixing the pumps and remediating the flooding caused by the storm.

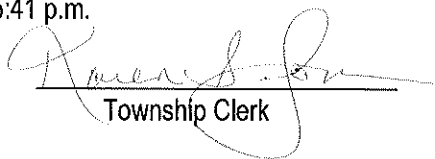
Mayor Sippel explained that the occupancy tax is set forth by the State and 3% is the max that can be charged. He also reminded of National Night Out on August 4th and the children's benefit concert on Wednesday, August 12th to include two bands as well as a drone show. He also thanked everyone involved for the success of the police camp this year.

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Mayor Sippel, seconded by Deputy Mayor Coombs. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.



Frank Sippel, Mayor



Township Clerk

Approved: *August 17, 2026*