

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER, COUNTY OF CAPE MAY, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION #2026-279

Title: A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER
AND DONALD VANAMAN, LOWER TOWNSHIP CHIEF OF POLICE

WHEREAS, extensive negotiations were conducted by the Township Manager and Labor Counsel with Lower Township Chief of Police Donald Vanaman; and

WHEREAS, the parties have reached an agreement; and

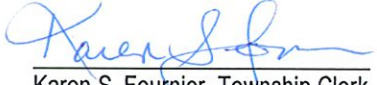
WHEREAS, the Township Manager and Labor Counsel recommend the Township Council's approval of the attached agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey, that the attached Agreement between the Township of Lower and Donald Vanaman, Lower Township Chief of Police, is hereby approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor, Township Manager and Township Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement attached hereto on behalf of the Township.

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

I, Karen S. Fournier, Township Clerk of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and exact copy of a resolution duly authorized by the Township Council at a meeting held on August 17, 2026


Karen S. Fournier, Township Clerk

AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER
AND
DONALD VANAMAN
THE CHIEF OF POLICE
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER

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THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER AND THE CHIEF OF POLICE OF THE
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**EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BY AND BETWEEN
THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER AND THE CHIEF OF POLICE OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER**

THIS AGREEMENT dated August 17, 2026 is by and between the **Township of Lower**, a municipal corporation of the County of Cape May, State of New Jersey, (herein after referred to as the "**Township**") and **Donald Vanaman**, of Erma, New Jersey 08204, (herein referred to as "**The Chief**").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Township and the Chief wish to continue this relationship for the foreseeable future upon terms deemed acceptable to both parties;

WHEREAS, the parties further seek to memorialize the terms of this employment relationship in writing; and

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1

EMPLOYMENT: The Township agrees to employ **Donald Vanaman** as the Chief of Police of the Township of Lower Police Department, during good behavior and in accordance with New Jersey State Statute and New Jersey Civil Service Regulations subject to the terms and conditions of employment set forth in this agreement.

ARTICLE 2

MANAGEMENT RIGHTS: The Township hereby retains and reserves unto itself all powers, rights, authority, duties, and responsibilities conferred upon and invested in it prior to the signing of this agreement, by the laws and constitution of the State of New Jersey and of the United States, except those limited by the specific and expressed terms of this agreement and then only to the extent that such specific and expressed terms hereof are in conformance with the constitution and laws of New Jersey and of the United States.

ARTICLE 3

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHIEF: The Chief shall perform his duties in a diligent manner in conformance with New Jersey State Statute NJSA 40A:14-118, in compliance with Township ordinances and the regulations and policies established by the New Jersey Attorney General's office. The responsibilities of the Chief shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- A. Conduct and manage the day to day operations of the police department.
- B. Administer and enforce rules, regulations, and special emergency directives regarding the disposition and discipline of the police force, its officers and personnel.
- C. Have exercise and discharge the functions, powers, and duties of the police force.
- D. Delegate such of his authority as he may deem necessary for the efficient operation of the force to be exercised under his direction and supervision.
- E. Prescribe the duties and assignments of all subordinates and other personnel.
- F. Report at least monthly at the regular meetings of the Township or by any such other forms as the Township shall require as to the operation of the police force during the preceding month.
- G. Report from time to time with the Township Manager and the Mayor regarding the operations of the Police Department.

ARTICLE 4

WORK WEEK: The position of Chief is a salaried position compensated pursuant to the salary paragraph in this contract.

This shall mean that the Chief shall dedicate himself to performing his duties without respect to a specific minimum or maximum number of hours worked per day of each week.

However, the Chief shall work on average a minimum of 40 hours per week. Time requirements for optimal job performance vary based on specific assignments, seasonal demands, or other factors. All parties endorse a policy of flexibility which allows the Chief to adjust normal working hours as conditions require to include all hours which enable the Chief to complete routine duties of his office and to perform special duties as assigned, attend meetings as assigned, to work hours as required in order to complete critical work tasks or handle emergency conditions as they arise.

ARTICLE 5

SICK LEAVE: The Chief shall be entitled to utilize accumulated sick leave as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract

ARTICLE 6

INJURY LEAVE: The Chief shall be entitled to injury leave as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract.

ARTICLE 7

FUNERAL LEAVE: In the event of the death in the Chief of Police's immediate family, the Chief of Police shall be given five (5) days leave with pay for a family member within the State of New Jersey and seven (7) days leave with pay if not within the State of New Jersey.

Immediate family shall mean spouse, sibling, child or grandchild, parent, parent-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law.

ARTICLE 8

VACATION DAYS: The Chief shall be entitled to vacation days as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract.

Additionally, the position of Chief requires an intensive number of hours which could occur during normal days off and in recognition of this fact, the Chief shall be permitted to sell back to the Township two weeks of accumulated vacation. Vacation time carried forward must be used by December 31st of the following year.

ARTICLE 9

HOLIDAY TIME: The Chief shall be entitled to the same holidays as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract.

ARTICLE 10

PERSONAL DAYS: The Chief shall be entitled to the same number of personal days as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract. (Such personal days shall not accumulate from year to year.)

ARTICLE 11

MEDICAL INSURANCE, HEALTH, AND EYE EXAMINATION PLAN:

1. The Chief shall have the same medical insurance, health, prescription, dental and eye examination coverage as specified in

the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract.

2. Upon retirement the Chief of Police shall be entitled to receive retiree health, dental, prescription and eye insurance coverage consistent with the then current Township of Lower Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract as of the date of his retirement, as though the Chief of Police was a retired member of that unit. Upon his death, his spouse will receive health, dental and eye insurance coverage along with the drug prescription plan as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract as of the date of his retirement, as if the Chief of Police were still living so long as she does not re-marry.
3. Upon reaching the age of sixty-five (65) years or age or whenever the retired Employee is first eligible for Medicare, the Township shall provide to the Chief health benefits in accordance with the health benefits provided to retirees age sixty-five (65) or whenever the retired Employee is first eligible for Medicare as provided for in the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract as of the date of his retirement.

ARTICLE 12

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE:

1. The Chief of Police shall not receive a clothing allowance.
2. It shall be left to the professional discretion of the Chief of Police as to when he should wear a formal or informal uniform or plain clothes.

ARTICLE 13

PERSONAL CAR:

1. Due to the nature of the employment conditions of the Chief of Police, the Township agrees to supply the Chief with an unmarked automobile to be used for police work and limited personal use. The make and model of the automobile shall be determined by the Township however, it shall be a full size four door car or SUV and shall be equipped with such safety equipment as needed for police work.

2. The Chief of Police shall be permitted to use the vehicle for his limited personal use within Cape May County. There shall be no limit on the use of the vehicle for police work or anything associated with police work, such as attending meetings, in-service training, conferences, and any other traveling needed to carry out the duties of the Chief.
3. The Township shall pay all expenses for the operation and upkeep of the vehicle such as car insurance, tires, gas, oil changes, etc.
4. The vehicle shall not be used by anyone other than the Chief of Police except that the Chief of Police may designate other members of the police department as appropriate, to use the vehicle for a designated police purpose.

ARTICLE 14

COLLEGE CREDITS:

The Chief of Police shall no longer be entitled to payment for college credits.

ARTICLE 15

COMPENSATION:

During the terms of this Agreement the Chief shall receive the following base wages:

1/1/2026	\$192,671.88
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The Parties agree to meet and discuss in good faith the terms of this contract (90) days prior to the expiration of this Agreement, the terms and contractual obligations for a potential agreement covering the subsequent contract year.

ARTICLE 16

LONGEVITY PAY INCREASES:

The Chief of Police is not entitled to Longevity Pay.

ARTICLE 17

RETIREMENT:

The Chief shall retain all pension rights under New Jersey Law. Upon retirement, the Chief shall receive a terminal leave benefit based upon the cash value of accumulated unused sick leave to a maximum of 180 days and subject to any statutory cap or limitation. The Chief may elect that such payments be made over two (2) budget years prior to the Chief's 25th year of service and/or retirement date. Just prior to retirement, an Employee shall receive in a lump sum, all unused vacation time which had accumulated in the year of retirement

and immediately preceding calendar year, together with all compensatory or other time off due him, or the time off at the Employees' option but, in either case, subject to approval of the Chief of Police and the Township Manager. If the lump sum option is not approved, the Employee shall be paid the amount due in equal monthly installments over a period not to exceed 12 months.

ARTICLE 18

LEGAL DEFENSE:

1. The Township shall supply the Chief of Police with necessary legal advice and counsel in the defense of charges filed against him in the performance of his duties in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey and of the United States. A selection of an attorney may be made by the Chief of Police subject to the approval of the Township and such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld by the Township. The Township shall similarly be responsible for indemnification and counsel, in connection with all claims including compensatory and punitive damages for actions filed subsequent to the expiration of this agreement.
2. In the event that the Chief of Police utilizes counsel other than that supplied by the Township, the fees and costs shall be agreed upon by the attorney and the Township prior to the attorney performing such services.

ARTICLE 19

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/LAW ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCES:

1. The Chief shall be permitted to attend and be compensated for at his regular salary, any school, seminar, or in-service training conducted or sponsored by the International Association of Chiefs' of Police, the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs' of Police, the New Jersey State Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or any other educational program of a management or supervisory nature provided that the same is approved by the Township Manager in advance. All expenses such as travel, room, food, tuition, special clothing, books, or any other charges connected with these educational programs, must be approved in advance by the Township Manager.
2. International Association of Chiefs' of Police Annual Training Conference: The Township agrees to grant paid training time off including travel time, of no more than five (5) days, for the Chief of Police to attend the annual International Association of Chiefs' of Police Training Conference which is held in various states throughout the United States each year. All costs and expenses

associated with attendance must be approved in advance by the Township Manager. If paid by the Township, the Township Manager will establish a maximum per diem rate for meals not to exceed \$100 per day and the Chief will be required to provide receipts for all expenditures. If the Chief of Police is not able to attend due to unforeseen circumstances, the Township Manager may grant approval for the Deputy Chief to attend in his absence.

The Chief of Police shall also be required to provide a written report to the Township Manager, which details the information presented at the conference, including how such information is valuable and useful to the Lower Township Police Department.

3. Membership Dues: The Township also agrees to pay for the Chief of Police's dues for membership in the Cape May County Police Chiefs' Association, the South Jersey Police Chiefs' Association, the New Jersey State Association of Police, the New Jersey F.B.I. National Academy Associates, and the International Association of Chiefs' of Police. The amount of membership dues shall not exceed the actual cost.

ARTICLE 20

NON-PRECEDENT:

This contract shall not be interpreted or used as a guide or benchmark for any other employment contract or terms and conditions of any other employee including Collective Bargaining Agreements and shall not be deemed an increase in salary given to all other municipal Officers and employees.

ARTICLE 21

CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS NOT COVERED BY THIS AGREEMENT:

All employment conditions not covered by this agreement shall continue to be governed, controlled, and interpreted by reference to either the Township Ordinances or the then current Township Police Superior Officers' Collective Bargaining Contract however, the parties agree that unless a benefit is specifically referred to in this agreement, the Chief will not be entitled to the benefit.

ARTICLE 22

ENTIRE AGREEMENT:

This agreement represents and incorporates the complete and final understanding between the parties on all issues which form the subject matter of this contract.

In the event of any conflict or dispute, it shall be resolved first through non-binding alternative dispute resolution and if not settled, then through binding

arbitration in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association, if requested by the Chief or the Township.

ARTICLE 23

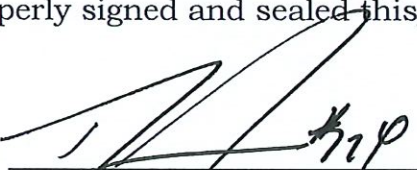
SEPARABILITY AND SAVINGS AND APPLICATION:

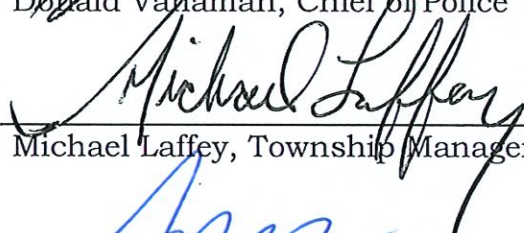
If any provision of the Agreement or any application of this Agreement to said employee or group of employees is held to be invalid by operation of law or by a court or other tribunal of competent jurisdiction, such provision shall be inoperative, but all other provisions shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect.

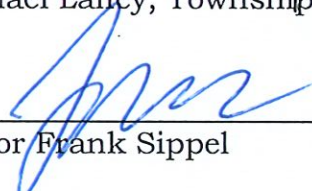
ARTICLE 24

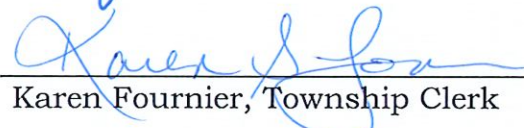
TERM: The term of this Agreement shall commence on January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, no separation of the Chief shall occur except under the requirements of the State of New Jersey Statutes and the New Jersey Civil Service Regulations. The terms of this Agreement may only be modified by the mutual consent of the parties.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this document to be properly signed and sealed this 17 day of August, 2026.

BY: 
Donald Vanaman, Chief of Police

BY: 
Michael Laffey, Township Manager

BY: 
Mayor Frank Sippel

BY: 
Karen Fournier, Township Clerk