

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – June 1, 2026

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on June 1, 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.
Mayor Frank Sippel

Also present: Michael Laffey, Township Manager, Robert Belasco, Township Solicitor and Amy Belasco, Deputy Township Clerk

Work Session

Presentation: Certificate of Recognition - Kylie Saltzman

Mayor Sippel explained that Kylie Saltzman placed second in a national judging scholarship program and received \$21,000 for her essay on "How are you showing patriotism and support for our country?"

Kylie read her essay and received applause and recognition, as well as a Certificate of Congratulations from Council.

Oaths of Office:

Police Chief Vanaman read the biography of Patrolman Ryan O'Neal. Mayor Sippel administered the Oath of Office to Patrolman O'Neal as his mother held the Bible and his brother-in-law, Det. Tom Shough pinned his badge.

Police Chief Vanaman read the biography of Patrolman Talen Terinoni. Mayor Sippel administered the Oath of Office to Patrolman Terinoni as his mother held the Bible and his father pinned his badge.

Mayor Sippel read a proclamation designating June as Pride Month in Lower Township.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – May 18, 2026

Res. #2026-206 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$892,592.03

Res. #2026-207 A Resolution Requesting Release of Demolition Bond for Block 663, Lot 3; 1104 Franklin Avenue, North Cape May, New Jersey

Res. #2026-208 Approval for an Agreement with TNT Event Management, LLC in Connection with the August 1, 2026 Annual Coombs/ Douglass Memorial Run

Res. #2026-209 Approval of Change Order #1 to South State Inc. for Resurfacing of Ridgewood Avenue – Bayshore Road to Delaware Avenue (LT-C-047)

Res. #2026-210 A Resolution Approving a Professional Service Contract with DeBlasio & Associates for Construction Phase Services for Rotary Community Park Phase 2 Jake's Law Playground (LT-C-028)

Res. #2026-211 Approval of a Professional Service Contract with Wizard's Festival of Fun INC for the Township of Lower's Independence Day Celebration July 3, 2026

Res. #2026-212 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Indemnification Agreement with the County of Cape May in Connection with the Coombs/Douglass Memorial Bay Run and the Temporary Closure of a Portion of Townbank Road (CR 648)

Res. #2026-213 Certification to Local Finance Board of Receipt and Review of Audit Sections General Comments & Recommendations

Res. #2026-214 Bid Acceptance and Contract Award for Arctic Avenue Storm Sewer Replacement Project, Contingent upon Approval from the NJ Water Bank (LT-C-071)

Res. #2026-215 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. #2026-216 A Resolution Enabling the Execution of an Agreement and Any Amendment(s) thereto with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program for Jake's Law Playground at Rotary Park
- Res. #2026-217 Resolution of the Township of Lower Consenting to the Issuance by the Township of Lower Municipal Utilities Authority of Not to Exceed \$4,100,000 Revenue Bonds (Junior Lien) to the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank, and to the Issuance of a Project Note in Anticipation of the Issuance of Such Revenue Bonds, for the Financing of Certain Sewage Pump Station Capital Improvements
- Ord. #2026-11 An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution of an Offer to Convey Temporary Work Area Easements to the United States of America, Acting by and through the United States Army Corps of Engineers in Connection with the Cape May Canal Project. This is the first reading of this Ordinance. The second reading and public hearing has been scheduled for June 15, 2026.

| | MOTION | SECOND | AYE | NAY | RECUSE | ABSTAIN | ABSENT |
|---------|--------|--------|-----|-----|--------|---------|--------|
| CONRAD | x | | x | | | | |
| WAREHAM | | | x | | | | |
| ROY | | x | x | | | | |
| COOMBS | | | | | | | x |
| SIPPEL | | | x | | | | |

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad acknowledged Family Fun Night was a success and thanked everyone for a great job.

Councilmember Wareham read a statement he had written regarding the pool and vows to get answers and to try to come up with a solution.

Councilmember Roy informed the June summer newsletter is coming out with a lot of great information.

Mayor Sippel announced the following: Summer basketball registration is now available as well as football registration; Escape the Cape triathlon is being held Sunday June 7, 2026; and the police camp is accepting applications.

Manager Laffey commented on Councilmember Wareham's statements and mentioned that he has a timeline of events leading up to the decision to close the pool. He informed everyone that Mayor and Council rely on him to handle the day-to-day operations and assures the public that he worked with the engineer and department heads to get this project complete, however, there were some deadlines missed. They did look for alternative solutions but the insurance company said it was a liability.

Jim Ridgeway, J Byrne Insurance Agency, Risk Management, JA Montgomery safety coordinator, expressed concerns of the public's safety if they were to open the pool while the construction was going on. They had met with staff and reviewed the job site and had significant concerns with a demolition report, discussed the risks of an active construction site as well as the increased risks and hazards.

Solicitor Belasco explained the repercussions possible if the Township had suspended the contract or even cancelled the contract, he mentioned the significant financial obligations the Township could be held responsible for.

Larry Shillington- 320 Roseann Ave- Asked why this project wasn't done prior to the season, he feels this should have been done in the off season.

Sabina Bloom- Mentions the pool is only open 10 weeks out of the year, she sates she saw pool passes would be available May 20th, the next day found out the pool would not be open. Expressed construction started that day, and that the Township sets the timeline, offered ways in which she thought would be a good solution.

Jim Pomponi- 111 E Richmond Ave- this is his 7th meeting asking mayor and council to please change his street from two way to only one way due to safety concerns.

Michael Morley- 426 Hollywood Ave, states the pool has ADA compliance issues, appreciates Councilmember Wareham's effort's and asks him to keep pushing for the residents.

Paula Morte- 2 Rutgers, stated how the pool is good for elders mental health, was sad to hear the pool was not going to be open and asked them to take it into consideration.

Ed Rose- 405 Leaming Ave, was a union contractor for 40 plus years, understands the insurance aspect but there has been nothing done at the pool until May 30th they put up barricades etc., pool brought relief and exercise to many and thinks the planning was done poorly.

Ken Orr- 148 E Bates Ave, consequences are for the tax payers, the pool was important to the community, mentions the family night at Clem Mulligan was a huge success and great job cleaning up.

Carmen Axman- 211 Raleigh Ave, hopes they find a solution for the pool, mentions Beach Bums is going before the planning and zoning board next week to build more condo's, suggested the Township purchase the property and make it a parking lot.

Solicitor Belasco explained the zoning and planning boards are separate and their applications are not viewed by mayor and council. Tells the people if they wish to comment on any upcoming plans, they would have to address that with planning and zoning boards.

Jill Lance- 129 W Bates Ave, explains she's a retired insurance agent, explains the construction company has insurance and names the township as an additional insured. She thanked Councilmember Wareham for his efforts. She mentions she's not here to argue just explains that she believes she needs that due to no air conditioning and to help with exercise. Concerned with the effect on the community, asks them to make better decisions and mentions she has a petition with 319 signatures on it.

Karen Watson- 18 Beechwood Ave, said council needs to do better, this was poor planning, mismanagement and a disservice to the community.

Nicola Wynnefield, 87 Millman Ln- Needs the pool for exercise, agrees with fellow community members, asks the manager when the timeline would be made available.

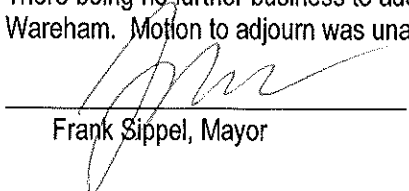
Antonia Zawisa, 103 Roslyn Ave- said the use of the pool promotes mental health and suggested they think outside the box for a solution.

Kathy Shillington- 320 Roseann, agrees with community members that seniors use this as a social outlet. She informed of an-ongoing issue with AC electric for a street light that's been out since December at Roseann & Clearwater.


Larry Shillington- 320 Roseann- voiced concern with a neighbor over fireworks and bottle rockets.

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 6:11 p.m.



Frank Sippel, Mayor



Township Clerk

Approved: June 15, 2026