

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – June 15, 2026

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on June 15, 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

Certificates presented to LCMR Students and members of the Key Club, Nouran Moustafa and Grace DeMatteis for securing funding to purchase and install a Handwashing Station to help improve and expand access to clean water for all members of the community.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes – June 1, 2026

Res. #2026-218 Authorization for the Payment of Vouchers \$1,255,413.98

Res. #2026-219 A Resolution Amending Resolution #2026-203, which Approved Eight (8) Concert Events Featuring Nine (9) Bands and Established the Dates on which the Concerts would be Held at the DRBA Ferry Terminal

Res. #2026-220 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 & Summer Concert Series August 12, 2026

Res. #2026-221 Annual Renewal of Liquor Licenses for the Year 2026-2027

Res. #2026-222 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Indemnification Agreement with the County of Cape May in Connection with the Annual Veteran's Day Parade and the Temporary Closure of a Portion of Bayshore Road (CR603)

Res. #2026-223 Authorizing the Sale of Township of Lower Surplus No Longer Needed for Public Use on GovDeals Online Auction Website

Res. #2026-224 Approval for Whale of a Day Festival

Res. #2026-225 Approval to Submit a Grant Application MA-2027 – Resurfacing of Park Boulevard, Memphis Avenue, and Rochester Avenue – 00173, and Execute a Grant Agreement for the FY2027 Municipal Aid Program (MA) with the New Jersey Department of Transportation

Res. #2026-226 A Resolution Amending the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual of Lower Township – New Jersey Family Leave Act

Res. #2026-227 Authorization for 2026 Incentive Award for Insurance Waiver

Res. #2026-228 Authorizing Pay Out of Terminal Leave (S. Goodroe, \$1591.59)

Res. #2026-229 Approval of Change Order #1 for R. Maxwell Construction Company Inc. for FY2024 NJDCA Small Cities Program Municipal Pool Building Replacement Project (LT-C-063)

Res. #2026-230 A Resolution Authorizing a Temporary Reduction in Fees for Pool Passes at the Township of Lower Municipal Pool for the 2026 Calendar Year

Res. #2026-231 A Resolution Authorizing and Approving a Shared Service Agreement between the Township of Lower and the County of Cape May

Ord. #2026-12 Bond Ordinance Providing for Various 2026 Capital Improvements, By and In the Township of Lower, in the County of Cape May, State of New Jersey; Appropriating \$560,000 Therefor and Authorizing the Issuance of \$530,000 Bonds or Notes of the Township to Finance Part of the Costs Thereof. This is the first reading of Ordinance #2026-12. The second reading and Public Hearing has been scheduled for July 6, 2026.

Ord. #2026-13 An Ordinance Temporarily Amending Chapter 475, Parks and Recreation Areas, Article IV, Fees and Reimbursements, Subsection 14, Recreation Fee Schedule, of the Code of the Township of Lower to Reduce Certain Municipal Pool Fees for the 2026 Summer Season. This is the first reading of Ordinance #2026-13. The second reading and Public Hearing has been scheduled for July 6, 2026.

Emaleigh Kaithern thanked Mayor and Council for their continued support of the Sunset Beach Sportsmen's Club.

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

Regular Agenda

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 second reading and public hearing for 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				

Engineer's Report

Andrew McTague from DeBlasio & Assoc. gave Council an update on various projects going on within the Township, including: Rotary Park Renovations, Bay Outfalls Extensions, Reconstruction of Ridgewood Ave, David Douglass Sr. Memorial Park Renovations, Public Works Building, Clem Mulligan Storm sewer pump station, Lincoln Blvd. pump station, Arctic Ave Sewer replacement, resurfacing of various streets in Diamond Beach, and the resurfacing of Frances Ave.

Mayor Sippel had asked about the stormwater GIS mapping services. Andrew explained it was supposed to be completed in 2025 however there was a substantial amount of information to be collected. Mayor had also inquired about the lease for David Douglass Park.

Solicitor Belasco explained the back and forth with lease and explained they are still waiting to hear back from the Army Corps of Engineers.

Manager Laffey weighed in that there are no violations with that property or any adjacent and had relayed that to the Army Corps of Engineers.

Administrative Reports

Clerk, Construction, Dog, Tax, Tax Sale Summary, Vital

Manager's Report

Mayor Sippel gave a brief update on the pool and mentioned he met with Councilmember Wareham, Manager Laffey, the contractor and engineers. He then turned it over to Manager Laffey to elaborate.

Manager Laffey mentioned the goal was to get the pool open by July 3rd, he pointed out the pool displayed on TV and showed how they're going to safely open the pool while the construction is still going on. He further explained how they plan to maintain the water with chemicals so once the cover is taken off, the pool will be ready, He also mentioned that earlier in the meeting they had passed a resolution reducing the fees for seasonal and daily passes.

Mayor reiterated that the plan is to be open by July 3rd, and that they have reduced the pool fees.

Manager Laffey explained that the restroom trailer was worked out with a shared service with the County so there will be no cost. He also mentioned they are still discussing hours of operation for the pool and once finalized they will advertise.

Call to the Public

Karen Watson, 18 Beechwood Ave, thanked manager and council, expressed she was very critical of them getting this done but is thankful they worked it out. She had asked for clarification of parking and Laffey explained where the parking will be. She also mentioned she was thankful for the reduced passes however didn't think it was necessary and mentions it is the best deal in Cape May County and suggests a donation box at the pool.

Mike Morley, 426 Hollywood Ave, thanked mayor and council for being responsive to the residents.

Paula unknown, 2 Rutgers Dr, appreciated and thanked the Township for listening to them.

Jill Lance, 129 W Bates Ave, expressed she was very proud of mayor and council, explained how she helped clean the pool and that someone had taken the skimmer from her and locked it away. She was upset with that and felt she was lied to.

Antonia Zawisa, 103 Roslyn Ave, thrilled with mayor and council to have the pool open and thanked them.

Kelly Scardone, 227 E Raleigh Ave, surprised about the parking spots in Diamond Beach and the painting that was being done, Manager Laffey explained it is an ongoing project and that some home owners do have approval for painted parking spots, the project is not yet completed.

Kathy Shellington, 320 Roseann, thanked everyone for coming together, however still no movement on the street light on her block. Manager Laffey explained they met with AC Electric earlier in the week and explained her street light is a little harder of a project due to underground wires and the street will need to be ripped up, they are in the process of scheduling the work.

Mary Louise Cannuli, 121 Vermont, explained she's only here for two months, thanked them for the handicap chair and thanked mayor and council for their efforts.

Manager Laffey explained DeSatnick donated a chair recently to help handicap residents get from their car to the pool.

Sabina Bloom, 2 Mowery Ave, thanked mayor and council for opening the pool and asked how will residents know when the pool will be open, was informed it will be advertised.

Terry Santavito, Village Rd, inquired about the beach entrance at Village Dr and the Townships plans to repair it.

Manager Laffey explained the beaches take a beating over the winters, they've talked about a bulk head and adding steps however they're trying to allocate funds and expressed they're trying to fix it.

Council Comments

Councilmember Conrad thanked everyone for their hard work to get the pool open, reminded everyone schools are out so be careful on the streets.

Councilmember Wareham mentioned his role as a Councilmember for Ward 2 is to advocate for his constituents, and that the pool was a priority for him and put pressure on the manager to make concessions and get it open. He also thanked the manager, solicitor, contractor and everyone else for their hard work.

Councilmember Roy thanked everyone for showing up and expressing their concerns. Mentioned council listened and wishes to have a good working relationship with the public.

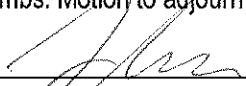
Deputy Mayor Coombs congratulated all the graduates and reminded everyone to be safe on the roads.

Councilmember Wareham acknowledged Tax Collector Kathy Brown with a 99% tax collection rate and commended her and her office on their tax sale and their hard work.

Mayor Sippel reminded everyone about July 3rd event along the bayfront beginning at 5 pm, they are going to start closing the streets at 3 pm, fireworks will start at 9 pm, the rain date for this event is scheduled for July 5th, and thanked everyone for coming out. He also announced the concert series at the ferry beginning Wednesday July 8th through every Wednesday in the summer. Also wanted to let everyone know the August 12th concert is for the children's fund.

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 6:08 p.m.



Frank Sippel, Mayor



Township Clerk

Approved: 