



**Upper Mount Bethel Township**  
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UPPER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025 – 6:00 PM

\*This meeting was held in person and live streamed through the Upper Mount Bethel Township Facebook page.

**I.**

Supervisor Bermingham called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

In attendance were Supervisor Bermingham, Supervisor Erler, Supervisor Friedman, Supervisor Albert, Supervisor Eckman, Township Engineer Coyle, and Township Manager Graziano. Solicitor Karasek was absent.

**II.**

**APPROVE THE AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to approve the agenda, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.

**III.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Tara Mezzanotte gave an update on the Rt. 611 project. PennDOT is taking action on the light/timing, moving the stop sign back and lengthening the light time. A joint meeting with County representatives, Representative Mackenzie and Representative Bresnahan, to start the process of how to look at the Delaware Water Gap holistically. Part of the closing of Rt. 611 is the National Environmental Policy Act process. This is required because of the significant resources that are federally protected in the area. Will the Township want to be called a Section 106 Consulting Party. She will follow up with this.

Ray Hartzell, River Rd., commented on the intersection of Railroad Ave and Rt. 611, at TK's. It is a very dangerous intersection. Ray spoke in favor of an ABC company coming into the Township and would like to suggest having more people helping with the negotiations, possibly Ron Angle and Charlie Cole, maybe that would help them get along.

Judith Henckel, Robin Hood Rd., commented on POWR, Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, has opened their online voting for River of the Year. Voting is open until January 24<sup>th</sup>. The nominees are, Delaware River, Youghlogheny River, and the Perkiomen Creek. Visit pawatersheds.org to vote.

Ray Higgins, Centerville Rd., commented on having a discussion with Supervisor Friedman at the January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting so that people could hear his side of the story. Supervisor Friedman stated that something has now come up and if it is addressed before the 27<sup>th</sup>, he will speak on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Supervisor Bermingham will confirm by Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>.

Ron Angle, Million Dollar Hwy., commented on the removal of the second public comment period. Supervisor Bermingham stated that if anyone has questions during the meeting, he is always open to anyone asking a question. Ron had some questions regarding financial statements, for Supervisor Erler, regarding misdemeanor charges. Supervisor Erler stated that he does not have a problem answering questions in a meeting with him. Ron asked Supervisor Erler if he has a permit to carry a concealed weapon, Supervisor Erler responded no. Supervisor Erler stated that he will open carry, which you do not need a permit to open carry. Ron discussed the meeting held August 8, 2022, there was a discussion on the authenticity of the Foundation. "Supervisor Teel asked Mr. Mezger if he conducted a forensic audit as stated at a previous meeting. Mr. Mezger stated he never said he was going to do that. Supervisor Teel asked Mr. Mezger how much money the Foundation has, is the Foundation a 501c? Mr. Mezger stated the Foundation is a private organization." Ron stated that it is in fact a 501c3, which is answerable to this government and township. When this went to court to get the accounting, which we were entitled to, the current board cancelled the lawsuit.

#### **IV.**

##### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. December 9, 2024, Meeting Minutes
2. December 20, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes
3. December 30, 2024, End of Year Meeting Minutes
4. Exonerations/Refunds

**MOTION** by Supervisor Erler to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

#### **V.**

##### **FINANCIALS**

1. Bill List-Manager Graziano read the bill list, totaling \$445,681.62. **MOTION** by Supervisor Albert to pay the bills in the amount of \$445,681.62, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

## VI. SUBDIVISIONS

1. Walter & Peter Snik Lot Line Adjustment Plan-Engineer Coyle stated this plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission and recommended for approval. Engineer Coyle stated that they are complying with his letter of December 9, 2024. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to approve the Walter & Peter Snik Lot Line Adjustment Plan, seconded by Supervisor Albert. Vote: 5-0.

## VII. ACTION ITEMS

1. Charles Felker (Auditor) Letter of Resignation-Supervisor Bermingham read Charles' letter of resignation, effective January 7, 2025. Charles has been connected with UMBT for 91 years, the last few decades serving on the Planning Commission and as elected Auditor. **MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham to accept Charles' letter of resignation, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0. **MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham to draft a Resolution for Charlie's years of service. Manager Graziano stated that the two other auditors would like to have a plaque made for him. Supervisor Bermingham amended his motion. **MOTION** by Supervisor Bermingham to draft a Resolution for Charlie's service to Upper Mount Bethel Township and that we also do a plaque for him, seconded by Supervisor Erler. Vote: 5-0.
2. Manager Benefits Agreement-Supervisor Friedman stated that the Manager's Benefits Agreement needs to be approved. The benefits are the same as last year's with the exception of his salary. Last year his salary was \$128,700, and with a 2% increase for 2025, salary is \$131,920. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to approve the Manager Benefits Agreement, with the salary increase, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Vote: 5-0.

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Supervisor Compensation Ordinance-Supervisor Bermingham stated that currently the Supervisors compensation is \$2,500. The new cap (effective 12/1/2024) is \$4,190. Supervisor Friedman stated that they factored in a 5% increase in the budget, which would be \$2,625 per Supervisor, per year. **MOTION** by Supervisor Friedman to approve the increase of the Supervisors Compensation to \$2,625.00, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Ray Higgins commented that for all they do, that is not enough. Joe Torre asked if this has been factored in without raising the municipal tax. Supervisor Erler stated that he read that this increase does not apply to the current Supervisors, only a newly appointed Supervisor receives the increase. Supervisor Erler amended the motion to approve the highest cap amount of \$4,190. Supervisor Friedman amended his **MOTION** to table to the 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, seconded by Supervisor Eckman. Vote: 5-0.
2. Tree Maintenance on Allegheny Rd-Supervisor Erler discussed the need to take the initiative and proactively go after areas of concern of trees on wires and/or about to fall down, preventative maintenance can go a long way. Manager Graziano stated that it is a good point, but only \$6,000 was factored into the budget for tree removal. Manager Graziano stated that we do work with a local tree service at \$1,500 per day. Supervisor Bermingham stated that Met-

Ed will be attending the meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss the recent power outages. Residents are encouraged to send questions they may have for Met-Ed to him. Road Crew Chief Lindsey Manzi will access the trees on Allegheny. **MOTION** by Supervisor Erler to have Ant's Tree Service spend two days trimming trees on Allegheny Rd, spend no more than \$3,000, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

## **IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

## **X. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Manager Graziano announced that Waste Management will be attending the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting to hear what the public wants. This is the year we will be putting bids out for a new contract. There was a discussion on delinquent garbage bills.

Supervisor Erler announced the TAC will be having their first meeting, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. January 20<sup>th</sup> Supervisor Erler will be having office hours at TK's at 7pm.

Supervisor Bermingham announced Beau's Festival, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, at the Park, 3-9pm. Beau Kelly was born in 2019 and tragically passed away at the age of 5. The family's goal is to gather enough donations to build a small park in his name at the Mt. Bethel Church. Supervisors Bermingham and Erler deliver the prizes for the best Christmas lights contest. Thank you to M & M Vineyards for donating some bottles of wine for the winners.

Ray Higgins discussed visiting sites of the ABC Company. Ray asked if the Board members alternate attending meetings with the ABC Company. Supervisor Friedman stated that he attends all of them because he is retired and is available most of the time. Ray asked if they would be willing to come to a meeting and talk to the residents. Supervisor Bermingham stated that they are willing and would have set-ups for different departments, i.e. a department that deals with water issues, or a department that deals with the environment. Ray stated that the EDC is planning on visiting the Ohio plant and talk with the people and businesses that live there.

Fran Visicaro said she googled ABC Data Centers and a lot of videos on them came up, it's a good way to learn about who they are and what they do.

Ron Angle commented on who is handling the negotiations, professional firms would cost thousands of dollars. Ron commented on the Park Foundation and how it is answerable to the citizens of the Township, the government for tax purposes. The money still has not been accounted for.

Mark Mezger commented on the negotiations and what is the strategy, and what is the Township bringing to the table.

Stavros Barbounis commented on having no written NDA. Supervisor Bermingham stated that there is no NDA, it was a verbal agreement.

**XI.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Supervisor Erler to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm, seconded by Supervisor Friedman. Vote: 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by Cindy Beck-Recording Secretary