

**MINUTES OF MEETING
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SEPTEMBER 8, 2025**

1. Call to Order: The September 8, 2025 action meeting of the Montgomery Township Board of Supervisors was held at the Montgomery Township Municipal Building, 1001 Stump Road, Montgomeryville, PA. Chairwoman Audrey R. Ware-Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chairwoman Audrey R. Ware-Jones
Vice-Chair Annette M. Long
Supervisor Tanya C. Bamford
Supervisor Candyce Fluehr Chimera
Supervisor Beth A. Staab (Arrived Item 6)
Township Solicitor Sean Kilkenny, Esq.
Carolyn McCreary, Township Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Police Chief William Peoples
Fire Chief William Wiegman
Director of Finance Blaine Bergey
Director of Planning & Zoning, Marianne McConnell
Favian Zendejas, Systems Administrator
Public Information & Admin. Asst Ava Komasz
Recording Secretary Deborah A. Rivas

2. & 3. Pledge of Allegiance and Public Comment: Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Ware-Jones called for public comment, and there was none.

4. Consent Agenda:

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Long, and unanimously carried (4-0), the minutes of the August 25, 2025 Board meeting and the payment of bills for September 8, 2025 in the amount of \$1,376,781.01 were approved as submitted.

Recognition:

5. Hispanic Heritage Month: Ms. Long announced that Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the U.S. Latinx and Hispanic communities. From September 15 to October 15, this event commemorates how these communities have influenced and contributed to American society at large. Hispanic Heritage Month began as a celebratory week when it was first launched in 1968; and the desire to recognize the contribution of the Latinx community has gained momentum throughout the 1960s when the civil rights movement was at its peak, and with it came a growing awareness of the United States' multicultural identities. In 1988, President George H. W. Bush declared the 31-day period from September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Long, and unanimously carried (4-0), the minutes of the August 25, 2025, Board meeting and the payment of bills for September 8, 2025, in the amount of \$1,376,781.01 were approved as submitted.

Presentation:

6. Appointment and Swearing in of Police Recruit Tyler Coughlin: Chief Peoples reported that a recruit hiring process was initiated on May 14, 2025 to fill a vacancy within the department's Patrol Division. Seventy-one applicants competed for the position of Recruit Police Officer in this hiring process. The process includes an application review, a physical agility test, two police oral review boards, and a background investigation (including a polygraph examination, neighborhood interviews, physical exam, psychological exam, drug testing, and employer interviews). Tyler Coughlin was selected as the top candidate and is before the Board this evening for consideration for appointment to the position of Recruit Police Officer. Tyler Coughlin was born and raised in Philadelphia. He graduated from Archbishop Ryan High School in 2017. Tyler began his career as a police officer when he was hired and sent to the police academy by the Philadelphia Police Department in 2022. Tyler was assigned to the 35th District where he has worked during his time with the Philadelphia Police Department. Chairwoman Ware-Jones administered the oath to Police Recruit Falgiatore.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Long and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board appointed Tyler Coughlin as a Recruit Police Officer in the Montgomery Township Police Department, effective September 8, 2025.

Planning and Zoning:

7. Waiver of Permit Fees – MTMSA: Ms. McConnell reported that the Township received a written request dated September 2, 2025 from Shannon Drosnock, Executive Director, Montgomery Township Municipal Sewer Authority, requesting the Township consider waiving the fees for the associated permits for their Surge Tank Aeration upgrade project at the Eureka Waste Water Treatment Plant located at 1485 Lower State Road. The project includes demolishing the existing grit equipment, installing new blowers, air piping, and an aeration system with electrical and HVAC upgrades. The Board has waived permit fees for Sewer Authority projects in the past. The fees are based on the estimated cost of the proposed project and are calculated to be \$23,429.50 for the building permit, including HVAC, electric, and plumbing work.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Bamford and carried (4-1, Ms. Long voting Nay), the Board waived the fees associated with the permits for the MTMSA Surge Tank Aeration upgrade project at the Eureka Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Administration and Finance:

8. Certification of the 2026 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the Police Pension Fund and Non-Uniform Employees' Pension Fund:

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board accepted the 2026 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Montgomery Township Police Pension Fund in the amount of \$440,694, and the 2026 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Montgomery Township Non-Uniformed Employees' Pension Fund in the amount of \$380,342.

Old Business:

9. Review and Recommendation of Proposals for a Fire Services Study: Ms. McCreary reported that at the August 25, 2025 Board of Supervisors public meeting, the Board discussed the merits of having a third-party independent consultant evaluate the plan brought forth by Chief Wiegman and also to review other options. It was also suggested that a comprehensive study of fire operations be conducted. Consensus of the majority was to obtain quotes with the Board voting 4 to 1 to do so and report back. Ms. McCreary stated that she reached out to three firms and explained the scope of the work to be done to help the Board arrive at a decision during the 2026 budget preparations. The firms that were contacted are Aspirant Consulting Group, LLC with a quote of \$16,500 to \$23,450 (not to exceed \$25,000) Phase 1 for a staffing study of six to eight weeks; and Center for Public Safety Management, LLC, with a quote of \$47,560 for a full study and a timeline of three to six months; and Municipal Resources, Inc. with a quote of \$25,000 plus travel and expenses for a Management letter or \$45,000 plus travel and expenses for a full study. The timing would be 60 days for a staffing study and 120 days for a full study.

Discussion followed. Ms. Bamford stated that the Chief has been helpful and thorough, but she wants an independent review and prefers Aspirant or MRI, as MRI worked with Upper Merion Township for their study. Ms. Chimera stated that she was against a study as she has spoken extensively with Chief Wiegman about the details and feels even more comfortable with the plan as members of the PA Career Fire Chiefs Association review his plan, and they made recommendations which have been included such as the SR6, noting the decline of volunteer firefighters in Pennsylvania, and the use of part-time and per-diem firefighters to fill the career staff gaps, as they can be unreliable at times. Ms. Long stated that she is against paying for studies, as the Chief has done all this work, he lives and breathes it daily, and she believes in the Chief's plan. Ms. Staab stated that we have an excellent plan, but we don't have a fresh set of eyes from other places. She spoke with the Upper Merion Township Assistant Chief. They used MRI and he felt they got a good return on their investment. She stated that it was necessary to do the due diligence, as what we don't see is what we don't know. Ms. Ware stated that she has met with consultants who did not see where a study was needed because the department was expanding, not being created from scratch. She has also reached out to others and is confident in the Chief's plan and does not see the value for a study.

Under public comment, Homer Elizardo of 119 Embassy Drive, stated that the job of a consultant is to give you options. He believes that the Center for Public Safety Management proposal gives you all the options and will give you a full master plan. The other proposals will only look at the staffing side. In the meantime, you can bring on part-time firefighters to give you relief. Mr.

Homer also stated that if you moved to the 24 x 48 schedule, vs. the 24 x 72, you can save \$700,000.

Ms. Bamford stated that as a supervisor, she has to make smart decisions. When she looks at the plan, there are unanswered questions, and she recognizes discrepancies. Ms. Bamford stated that an independent consultant would look at all of that with fresh eyes and a new perspective. She stated that certain calls, such as electrical calls, may not require the same response. Other expenses have not been considered, such as a ten-year plan for equipment and facilities.

Under public comment, Jeanine Hurry of 108 Tudor Drive, said that she agrees with Mr. Elizardo and in addition to his comments, she believes that a regionalization of fire safety in the area is the best approach. She asked what other departments are going through and how do we work with others. Ms. Ware-Jones responded that regionalization is not going to happen in the near future as there are too many Chiefs in their own "kitchens". It will take an upper-level regional approach to make something like that happen.

A variety of suggestions were then made by Board members and residents, one of which was to table the discussion until the next meeting so that the Board members could review all of the proposals in detail. In addition, Ms. McCreary reminded everyone that any changes to staffing hours will require an opening of the contract, and the career firefighters are not in favor of the 24 x 48 shifts. Any contract opening will require a give and take; they will want something in return. The overall consensus was to table the discussion to the next meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Ware-Jones made a motion to table the proposed expansion of the fire career staffing fire study proposals to the September 22, 2025 meeting. Ms. Chimera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones and seconded by Ms. Chimera, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Rivas, Recording Secretary