

**MINUTES OF MEETING
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
NOVEMBER 10, 2025**

1. Call to Order: The November 10, 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
Township Solicitor Sean Kilkenny, Esq.
Township Manager Carolyn McCreary

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Police Chief William Peoples
Fire Chief William Wiegman
Director of Finance Blaine Bergey
Director of Planning & Zoning, Marianne McConnell
Public Information & Admin Assistant Ava Komasz
Director of Information Technology Richard Grier
Recording Secretary Deborah A. Rivas

2. & 3. Pledge of Allegiance and Announcements: Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Ware-Jones made the following announcements: The Township will be hosting several holiday drives for winter coats, toys and food. In addition, the Township will host several holiday events, the Touch-A-Truck event toy drive, a craft fair and Breakfast with Santa.

4. Public Comment: Ms. Ware-Jones called for public comment. A Township resident inquired about the installation of EV charging stations at the Recreation Center and what needs they would address. Ms. McCreary explained that visitors would be able to use them during their visit to the center for a specified period. The stations would be provided and installed with a grant from the DVRPC. The resident stated that he did not see the need for these charging stations.

5. Announcement of Executive Session: Township Solicitor Sean Kilkenny, Esquire, announced that the Board of Supervisors met in Executive Session earlier this evening at 6:00 PM in person, relating to real estate and personnel matters. Mr. Kilkenny stated that the topics discussed are legitimate subjects of an Executive Session under the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law.

6. Consent Agenda:

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Long, and unanimously carried (5-0), the minutes of the October 27, 2025 Board meeting, the minutes of the October 24, 2025 Budget Worksession, and the payment of bills for November 10, 2025, in the amount of \$482,951.99 were approved as submitted.

Presentation:

7. Appointment and Swearing in of Police Recruit Ryan Varela: 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). Ryan Varela was selected as one of the top candidates and is before the Board this evening for consideration for appointment to the position of Recruit Police Officer. Officer Ryan Varela was born in Philadelphia, PA, and spent his childhood there until his family moved to the Willow Grove Area. Ryan attended Upper Moreland High School and played soccer, ice hockey, lacrosse, and tennis. Ryan is currently a Sergeant in the Pennsylvania Army Reserves and assigned to the 333rd Engineer Company out of Reading, PA. In May of this year, Ryan attended the Temple University Police Academy in Ambler, PA, and graduated in October of 2025. Ryan has completed all the required certifications and testing to become a certified police officer in Pennsylvania. Chairwoman Ware-Jones administered the oath to Police Recruit Varela.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Long and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board appointed Ryan Varela as a Recruit Police Officer in the Montgomery Township Police Department, effective November 11, 2025.

8. Appointment to the Environmental Advisory Committee: Ms. McCreary reported that an application was received by Paul Mau, expressing an interest in serving on the Environmental Advisory Committee. Mr. Mau introduced himself and shared his background and interest in serving on the Environmental Advisory Committee.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Staab and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board appointed Paul Mau to the Environmental Advisory Committee to serve an existing three-year term to expire on January 1, 2028.

Planning and Zoning:

9. Waiver of Permit Fee for MTMSA: Ms. McConnell reported that request was received from Shannon Drosnock, Executive Director, Montgomery Township Municipal Sewer Authority, requesting the Township consider waiving the fees for the associated permits for their Ultraviolet Disinfection project at the Eureka Waste Water Treatment Plant located at 1485 Lower State Road. The project includes the construction of a new 1,596 UV Building including electric and an associated driveway.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board waived the fees associated with the permits for the MTMSA Ultraviolet Disinfection Project at the Eureka Waste Water Treatment Plan in the estimated amount of \$6,150.44.

10. Review Zoning Hearing Board Application for New Britain Township: Ms. McConnell reported that a notice of meeting was received by the Township regarding an application before the New Britain Township Zoning Hearing Board for their November 20, 2025 meeting. The

applicant seeks relief in order to construct (3) warehouses on the property located at Walnut Street and 56 Walnut Street at County Line Road across the street from Whistlestop Park.

Board consensus was not to enter an appearance for the applications, allowing the Zoning Hearing Board to render decisions based on the testimony presented.

Presentation:

11. 2026 Proposed Montgomery Township Municipal Sewer Authority: Shannon Drosnock, Executive Director, presented the proposed 2026 budget. The authority is seeing increased costs in every aspect of its operation. The Authority has not raised fees since 2012 but will need to increase them next year. The Authority is proposing a fixed rate of \$87.59 and a rate of \$ 5.34 per 1,000 gallons used, up from a rate of \$ 2.84 per 1,000 gallons used. The average increase will be between 3% and 35% depending on usage. Capital projects were discussed. They have annually started to increase to over \$1M in 2020 and grew to just under \$5M in 2024 and are expected to rise for approximately four more years. The Capital Contributions come from tapping fees and net operating surplus. The tapping fees have been reduced as the Township is 98% developed and the net operating surplus has been reduced as sewer rates have not changed. The operating budget for 2026 is expected to be \$7,792,395.00, with operating expenses at \$6,691,650.00.

12. Proposed Fire Department Staffing Expansion Budget: Ms. McCreary reported that at the October 28, 2024, Board of Supervisors public meeting, Chief Wiegman presented a detailed report concerning fire staffing and concerns about the decline in volunteer firefighters. At the April 28 public meeting, Chief Bill Wiegman provided further details about this. Costs were shared with the Board of Supervisors at their June 23 public meeting. The rationale for the conversion was shared with the Public Safety Committee meeting in May, and the financial data was reviewed with the Finance Committee on July 24.

Finance staff prepared an estimate of the cost for this expansion using Chief Wiegman's staffing recommendations of six (6) firefighters on a squad and the terms of the current collective bargaining agreement. Benefit costs were calculated based on current premiums, projected premium increases, and, for health insurance, an equal mix of participant classifications (i.e., employee, employee/spouse, family).

During the discussion at the June 23 public meeting, the Board requested that staff evaluate the overtime costs if the Township were to take a "phased" approach over three years, increasing real estate taxes each year instead of all at once.

At the July 28 public meeting, Board consensus was to host in-person meetings to give residents a chance to learn about the plan, the reason for it, and the impact it would have on their Township real estate taxes. Emails were sent to all the HOA points of contact for the residential neighborhoods in the Township. Staff also publicized the plan in our e-news and social media platforms. Chief Wiegman and Ms. McCreary met with residents in Montgomery Walk and

Neshaminy Falls. Both are 55+ communities. No other HOA reached out and requested a meeting.

On Thursday, August 28 at 7:00 P.M., Chief Wiegman and Ms. McCreary hosted an in-person town hall meeting here at the Township building. It was also live-streamed and recorded.

A postcard mailer announcing the discussion at tonight's meeting and providing a QR code to the dedicated webpage was mailed to 11,304 addresses, including residences and businesses.

The Fire Department's proposed 2026 budget contains four (4) staffing scenarios that Chief Wiegman will discuss with the Board.

Ms. Ware-Jones opened the meeting up to public comment first. Business owners and residents made comments both in favor of the expansion and against the expansion. Most comments against the expansion concerned a tax increase, as well as the need for a consulting firm to review and provide a study to ensure that the Township is proceeding in the right direction. Some residents stated that they were unaware of this proposal and had received a card in the mail. Some residents asked about what the Township was doing to cut costs. Comments in favor of expanding the fire department expressed concern for safety, citing response times, the lack of volunteers to fill shifts, and the need to move forward with some form of expansion. Some residents asked for this expansion to be put under a referendum; however, it was explained that this is not permitted by Pennsylvania law for municipalities.

The Board of Supervisors shared their comments and concerns. Ms. Bamford stated that the Board is required to provide emergency services by law, and a lack of volunteers is a concern all over the state. She was in favor of a consultant to review the proposal, which she believes requires further study. She feels the Township needs to move forward, but at a pace that is done properly with an impartial third party. Ms. Staab stated that we do need to have public safety and structure, and we need a study to see what other communities have learned as they have expanded. Ms. Chimera stated that expansion is needed now. She has served on the Board for 16 years and believes that Chief Wiegman is our expert, and she has complete faith in his proposal. Ms. Long also believes that Chief Wiegman is our expert, stating he is familiar with the department, its staff, and the volunteers. She also wants residents to become more aware of what is happening at the Township and encourages everyone to get involved. Ms. Ware-Jones stated that no one knows the work better than those who do it every day. Chief Wiegman was asked to come up with a proposal for what was best for the department and has subsequently looked at other scenarios. She is not on board for a staffing study, but suggested the Board and staff look at the numbers again and make sure they are accurate. Ms. Bamford suggested the Board hold an emergency meeting to give staff time to go over the numbers again.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Bamford, seconded by Ms. Ware-Jones, and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board called for a special public meeting on Friday, November 14, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Township building to continue the discussion on the proposed Fire Department expansion.

13. 2026 Proposed Township Budget: Ms. McCreary presented information on where the Township receives its income. She also explained the average township tax bill and how the North Penn School District and Montgomery County are separate taxing authorities. Out of 38 Townships in Montgomery County, Montgomery Township is 23rd in millage rank. Ms. McCreary also reviewed the Capital Projects proposed for 2026. There is no proposed tax increase for any other Township needs, other than the current discussion and consideration of expanding the career firefighters. Under public comment, a Township resident requested that the current budget show an end-of-year projection, rather than a current balance. Mr. Bergey explained that the beginning balance in 2026 is the end-of-year projection for 2025. Another resident requested that the 2026 budget include a line item for a porta-potty to be located at the Bark Park.

Administration and Finance:

14. Authorization to Advertise the 2026 Proposed Budget: The Board agreed to table the advertisement of the 2026 Proposed Budget to the next meeting on November 14, 2026.

MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (5-0), the Board tabled the Fire Department Staffing Expansion Budget and Advertisement of the 2026 Project Budget to the November 14, 2025 meeting.

Old Business:

15. Public Outreach – Motorists' Speed Reduction Campaign: Ms. McCreary stated that during recent discussions about speeding complaints in the Township, specifically Grays Lane, the Board and staff discussed additional opportunities to remind motorists to drive safely and obey the speed limits, particularly in our neighborhoods. Ms. Staab shared a bumper sticker reminding people to slow down in neighborhoods and staff designed one for the Township. Since many people don't want bumper stickers on their cars, this would be a magnetic option. The Board agreed that they preferred the blue sticker stating "We set the pace".

New Business:

15. Adjournment: Upon motion by Ms. Ware-Jones and seconded by Ms. Long, the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Rivas, Recording Secretary