Montgomery Township
Business Development Partnership
April 21, 2026
12:30 PM

Montgomery Township's Business Development Partnership (BDP) met on April 21, 2026 at the Township Administration Building. A virtual option was available via Microsoft Teams.

The members in attendance included: Wesley Nappen, Joy Zwicker, Mary Griffith-Alfarano, Jay Haenn

Staff member Ava Komasz, Interim Community Engagement Manager, was also in attendance.

Meeting Minutes

- **Call to Order -** The meeting was called to order at 12:33 p.m.
- **Approval of Minutes - March 17, 2026** - On a motion by Mr. Haenn, seconded by Mr. Nappen, the March 17, 2026, meeting minutes were approved.
- **Public Comment**
  - There was no public comment.
- **New Business**
  - Health Insurance Presentation.
    - ♣ All employers and employees are facing a difficult renewal season. All health insurance carriers, as of January 1, 2026, are losing money, hence increasing rates. Insurance carriers do not have to disclose how much money they make in rebates, but for those who are not fully insured, the responsibility is on the employer to pay rebate fees, thus making insurance companies additional money. Employers providing insurance should ask about rebate rates when renewing to avoid large fees. For example, gene therapy drugs being approved by the FDA at a rebate cost of over $300,000. Other drugs that are costing companies a lot are weight loss drugs, many companies are choosing to cover it only if medically necessary. Negotiating renewal rates is essential for employers. There are tools available to run a GRX report to know what medications employees are taking which supports employer pushback with insurance companies. A full Employee Benefits Market Outlook booklet was handed out to members with additional details.
  - **Business Updates**
    - ♣ **Jay Haenn (Lansdale Auto Groups) -** Mr. Haenn reported that stock is finally starting to come up after being down. New products are helping drive sales, which are up 12%, though there is still room to grow. The beginning of April has been slow, however, due to the conflict in the

Middle East. Consumer confidence is the lowest it has been since World War II.

- ♣ **Wesley Nappen (Nappen & Associates) -** Mr. Nappen reported increased vacancies and limited building supply due to construction costs and tariffs. Focus is now on the size of the space and use of the space rather than outright growth or future ambition. Inflated rents are making it difficult for businesses to start and expand.
- ♣ **Mary Griffith-Alfarano (Fulton Bank)** - Ms. Griffith-Alfarano reported an increase in business line credits. Big RFPs are being told that without a line of credit, they cannot bid. However, consumers are becoming more cautious overall. There is an increase in cash business which requires vault services and is a risk to both the customer and bank.
- ♣ **Joy Zwicker (Iron Valley Real Estate)** - Nationally there is starting to be a swing to a more balanced market. However, in the local area, it is still a seller's market. Ms. Zwicker reported a new position, Director of Real Estate Services, and will no longer be attending BDP meetings in person. With the conflict in Iran, people are being more cautious when it comes to homebuying.

- **Township Updates**
  - ♣ Ms. Komasz announced Montgomery Township's Memorial Day Weekend Kickoff: America 250 Event which will be held on Friday, May 22 from 5:00-9:00 p.m. and includes several vendors and a fireworks display.

- **Old/Other Business**
  - The group briefly reviewed some of the upcoming presentations.
    - ♣ Ms. Komasz will reach out to Chief Peoples and Carolyn McCreary, Township Manager to schedule each of them. One will present in May. One will present in November.
    - ♣ October will tentatively include a presentation by the Fire Chief if someone is hired. If not, Ms. Griffith-Alfarano will do a presentation on banking.
  - The group discussed AI and how it can have both benefits and disadvantages. AI can be used as a tool but could have negative implications by driving laziness and potentially replacing human employees with a particular concern for younger employees.
- **Adjournment –** The regular meeting adjourned at 1:43 pm. The next meeting will be on May 12, 2026, at 12:30 p.m. in the Township Administration Building. A virtual option will be available.