MIDDLESEX TOWNSHIP
WORKSHOP MEETING AGENDA
October 30, 2026
7:30 AM

OFFICIALS PRESENT:	SUPERVISORS:	Chairman Donald S. Geistwhite, Jr.
		Vice-Chairman Phil Neiderer
		Joe Vancosky
	SOLICITOR:	Keith O. Brenneman
	PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR:	Chief Andrew Bassler
	ZONING OFFICER:	Mark D. Carpenter
	ASST. CODES ENFORCEMENT/ MS4 COORDINATOR:	Gerald Steigleman
	ENGINEER:	Gerald "Bud" Grove
	MANAGER/ ROADMASTER:	Zachary L. Zook
	SECRETARY/ TREASURER:	Eileen Gault
	FIRE/EMC:	Chief Edwin Beam

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Geistwhite called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m., at the Middlesex Township Municipal Building, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: John Manta questioned why the meeting was scheduled for 7:30 a.m. on a Friday, noting that the time may prevent people from attending because they cannot take time off work. He stated that he was still waiting for an answer to his question.

Earl Beam of Country Club Road expressed frustration over the ongoing impacts of PAX-1 construction on nearby residents, including noise, dust, poor air quality, and disruption to their ability to enjoy their properties. He also questioned the denial of blasting-related damage to his home, despite claims that monitoring showed no damage. He urged the Board to use a portion of the $15 million community benefit funds to compensate and assist affected residents, stating that the Township should ensure the developer follows through on its commitment to be a good neighbor.

Vice Chairman Neiderer acknowledged the negative impacts of construction on Country Club Road residents and stated that he has continued advocating for the developer to buy out or otherwise financially compensate residents living adjacent to the construction site. He said the Township would continue pressing the developer to address their concerns.

Earl Beam thanked him but emphasized that residents also want better communication and transparency, stating that the developer does not return calls or respond to letters, leaving residents feeling uninformed and without reassurance about what is happening.

Andrew Dymski offered a prayer, asking for God's presence, wisdom, and guidance for the Township Supervisors as they lead the Township.

Michelle DeNofa reported that construction work was taking place after 7:00 p.m. the previous evening, stating that residents could hear the activity. She questioned what the Township would do to address the apparent violation of permitted construction hours. Vice-Chairman Neiderer agreed to contact the developer to determine what work was taking and noted that the Township's noise ordinance allows noise between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Discussion and possible motion on extension of review time for Final Land Development Plan for Pennsylvania Digital (PAX-1) Phase 1-C to 02/03/2027 (current review ends 11/04/2026, BOS action deadline 11/04/2026):

Discussion and possible motion on extension of review time for Final Land Development Plan for Pennsylvania Digital (PAX-1) Phase 2 to 02/03/2027 (current review ends 11/21/2026, BOS action deadline 11/20/2026:)

The previous two items on the agenda were acted on together. Vice Chairman Neiderer explained that the developer requested an extension to allow time for significant redesigns based on discussions with a proposed tenant. Potential changes include a closed-loop cooling system, as well as battery backup power that could reduce the number of generators on the property. Livic Engineering is working on the revised plans, which would be presented to the public, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to grant the extension of review time for the Final Land Development Plan for Pax 1, Phase 1C, and Phase 2 to February 3, 2027.

Discussion and possible motion on request for reduction of improvement security held for Preliminary/Final Subdivision & Land Development Plan for Wawa Food Market #8236: Engineer Grove recommended (memorandum dated 10/16/26) reducing the financial security for the Wawa Food Market No. 8236, Financial Security Reduction No. 2, to $323,816.08, leaving $34,819.88 to complete the remaining site improvements. The developer hopes to complete construction by the end of the year and open in mid-January. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to reduce the improvement security for the Preliminary Final Subdivision Land Development Plan for Wawa Food Market with the remaining balance to complete site improvements of $34,819.88.

Discussion and possible motion on request for reduction of improvement security held for Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Lot 1 of the Pine Hill Industrial Park, Paint Booth and Trailer Parking: Engineer Grove recommended (memorandum dated 10/16/26) reducing the financial security for Lot 1 of Pine Hill Industrial Park (paint booth and trailer parking) by $128,105.81, leaving a balance of $66,881.00 for the remaining site improvements. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to reduce the improvement security held for the Preliminary Final Land Development Plan for Lot 1 of the Pine Hill Industrial Park paint booth and trailer parking to $66,881.00.

Discussion and Possible action to approve the Stormwater Management Plan and Report for 200 West Middlesex Drive: Engineer Grove recommended (memorandum dated 10/26/26) approval of the residential stormwater management plan for 200 West Middlesex Drive, subject to submission of an as-built plan and an operation and maintenance plan and agreement. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously

agreed to approve the stormwater management plan for 200 West Middlesex Drive, subject to the Township Engineer's conditions being met.

Discussion and possible motion to reaffirm the engagement of Eckert Seamans as special counsel for the Board of Supervisors: Township Solicitor Brenneman explained that Eckert Seamans was engaged as special counsel due to conflicts of interest involving three matters: the Cumberland County zoning text amendment, any subsequent zoning ordinance proceedings related to the amendment, and the limited rehearing concerning the principal solar array on the Deitch Farm property. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to reaffirm the engagement of Eckert-Siemens as special counsel for the Board of Supervisors.

Discussion and possible motion to reaffirm legal services provided by Stevens & Lee to Middlesex Township: Solicitor Brenneman explained that the letter confirms Stevens & Lee's engagement in several matters involving data center litigation and covers additional legal services provided since the firm was originally engaged. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to reaffirm the legal services provided by Stevens & Lee to Middlesex Township.

Discussion and possible motion on approving distribution of Fire Tax Funds as requested by Chief Ed Beam: Chief Beam presented the proposed distribution of the Township's fire tax funds among the local fire companies, based on the number of calls each company responds to within the Township. The total distribution was $366,065.00, including fire tax allocations and paid staffing contributions. Chief Beam discussed the increasing challenges facing local fire services, including declining volunteer staffing and the need for paid firefighters and noted that neighboring municipalities are working together to address staffing and funding needs. Establishing a Township-owned fire company would be cost-prohibitive, with an estimated $7–$10 million needed for a station, approximately $2 million for an engine, and $3 million for a ladder truck. On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to approve the distribution of the fire tax funds as requested by Chief Beam.

Discussion and possible motion on amendments to the non-uniform Healthcare Plan through PMHIC: Township Manager Zook reviewed options presented by Benecon/PMHIC (Pennsylvania Municipal Health Insurance Cooperative) to help reduce the Township's rising health insurance costs, which have doubled over the past three years and is the largest increase in the proposed 2027 budget. Three potential cost-saving changes were discussed.

On the motion of Vice-Chairman Neiderer, seconded by Chairman Geistwhite, it was unanimously agreed to change the medical RX plan to maintain a zero co-pay for employees, but a $600 out of pocket deductible and removing weight loss drug coverage.

Other health insurance plan changes will be brought back for further discussion and a vote at the next meeting.

Discussion on 2027 Township Budget: Manager Zook presented the preliminary 2027 budget and clarified that it does not include any anticipated data center payments, CBA funds, or other data center revenue. The only potential impact would be a slight increase in real estate tax

revenue resulting from a higher property assessment. The budget also does not yet reflect the health insurance savings options discussed earlier in the meeting.

Manager Zook reviewed the Township's revenue sources, such as taxes, franchise fees, fines, grants, state aid, and reimbursements noting that most projections remained consistent with the prior year. Manager Zook noted that the Township currently has approximately $3.5 million in reserves and expects another operating surplus this year, largely due to police vacancies and lower-than-anticipated payroll and benefit expenses.

The Board discussed the recent reassessment of the 694-acre PAX-1 property. The County increased the assessment from approximately $1.4 million to $4 million. The Cumberland Valley School District challenged the assessment, seeking a value of $44 million, which was the developer's purchase price. The developer agreed to the $44 million assessment and will not appeal.

The increased assessment is expected to generate approximately:

- $550,000 in additional annual revenue for Cumberland Valley School District.
- $100,000 for Middlesex Township.
- $105,000 for Cumberland County.

Manager Zook reviewed the general government expenses, including wages, legal services, building maintenance, public safety, zoning/code enforcement, emergency management, public works, recreation and administrative expenses.

Chief Bassler reviewed several police department expenses, including:

- Police academy training at approximately $6,300 per cadet, with partial reimbursement upon successful completion.
- Post-retirement health insurance and longevity payments required under the collective bargaining agreement (CBA).
- Overtime, which is expected to decrease as staffing improves.
- Uniforms and equipment.
- Payroll taxes, workers' compensation, health insurance, and pension costs.

Manager Zook reported that the preliminary budget currently has an estimated $115,000 shortfall, however, he expects some additional revenue but noted that expenses may need to be reduced to balance the budget and does not anticipate increasing real estate taxes for 2027. The Board discussed continuing to review the budget with staff before presenting it for public review.

Discussion and possible motion on 2027 Public Meeting Schedule: The Board of Supervisors and staff discussed the 2027 meeting schedule in response to residents' concerns about the accessibility of the Friday 7:30 a.m. meetings. Options included maintaining the current schedule, holding one monthly meeting, or moving both monthly meetings to 6:00 p.m. The Board noted that reducing meetings to once a month could result in lengthy meetings due to the volume of business, reports, bill approvals, and public comment.

The Board also discussed whether the Planning Commission could reduce its meetings to once a month. Planning Commission Members were asked to discuss the frequency of their meetings at

their next meeting and report back to the Board. The Zoning Hearing Board will move its meetings to 6:00 p.m. in 2027.

There was discussion about the possibility of live streaming and recording Township meetings in 2027 to make them more accessible to residents who cannot attend in person. The Township Manager has contacted vendors and other municipalities to gather information on available options and costs. The Supervisors expressed support for live streaming and noted that procedures would need to be established for public participation. It was agreed to postpone a decision on the 2027 meeting schedule while the Planning Commission considers its own meeting frequency. No action was taken, and the schedule remains to be determined.

Township Board /Staff Comments:

- Zoning Officer Carpenter reported that Sheetz on Wolfs Bridge Road is expected to close for approximately two months beginning in January to allow for demolition and replacement work, pending approval.
- Codes Enforcement Officer Steigleman gave an update of the Diamond of Carlisle property. The owners completed cleanup and secured the property by boarding it up. The Zoning Officer conducted an inspection and advised the owners that graffiti must be painted over, and the property must continue to be maintained, including mowing grass and weeds. The property remains on the blighted property list, and a letter outlining the remaining requirements will be reviewed by the Solicitor before being sent. The owners agreed to monitor and maintain the property. The property is currently for sale.
- Township staff noted that the Board should also consider residents who work second and overnight shifts when discussing meeting times.
- Township Engineer Grove reported that the Township received the first PCI (pavement condition index) report identifying four areas along Country Club Road, between Bernheisel Road and Harrisburg Pike, requiring patching or repairs. The Township Manager and Engineer are reviewing the recommendations and must respond within seven days. Repairs are expected within the next month under the PAX-1 developer's agreement.
- PAX-1 Landscaping: A resident expressed concern that some of the newly planted trees and shrubs appeared too small and may not survive the winter. The Board noted that the Master Developer's Agreement includes financial security covering the replacement of trees and shrubs that do not survive during the five-year maintenance period.

Executive Session: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned to Executive Session by Vice-Chairman Neiderer at 9:05 a.m. for pending litigation and personnel matters, with no action to be taken as a result.