Board of Supervisors Budget Workshop Meeting
Monday, October 20, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.

1) Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call.

Supervisor Mike Ksiazek called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisors Ksiazek, Hannah, Quirple, and Kane attended the meeting. Also present were Township Manager Eden Ratliff, Assistant Township Manager Nick Valla and various department heads.

2) Public Comment.

None.

3) 2026 Budget Process.

Mr. Ratliff opened the meeting by noting that this was the final public budget workshop before the proposed 2026 budget is formally presented. All information provided during this session was for discussion purposes, with the intention of allowing the Board of Supervisors to give feedback and for the community to ask questions, share concerns, and express priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

Mr. Ratliff outlined the meeting format, which included:

- A brief review of the current budget.
- An overview of how capital budgeting works.
- A detailed walkthrough of proposed capital projects.
- A review of available funding sources.
- A final summary showing how all revenue and expenditures translate into 2026 projections.
- An opportunity for both the Board and the public to provide input.

A key figure referenced was the 2025 budgeted deficit, which, while currently supported by fund balance, remains an important indicator of the Township's financial situation. This figure will influence how decisions are made heading into 2026.

The Manager emphasized that the anticipated 2026 operating deficit, if all existing service levels remain unchanged, is approximately $3.7 million. This increase reflects rising operational costs, which grow by roughly $1 million per year due to contractual obligations, insurance, and inflationary pressures.

The presentation also highlighted that the average Middletown Township real estate tax bill is approximately $560, not including taxes levied by the County, School District, or other jurisdictions. This context was provided to frame the broader budget discussion around revenues, expenses, and service expectations.

4) Proposed 2026 Capital Projects

a) Parks & Recreation – Capital Maintenance

No new or expanded park facilities are proposed for 2026; all projects are maintenance of existing assets. Mr. Kopera addressed some key projects including resurfacing and sealing the tennis courts at Simmons Park, playground replacement at Jones Park and security enhancements at multiple parks and facilities. Board members asked whether public works could complete some of this work in-house. Mr. Kopera noted that public works is currently structured around maintenance rather than major construction, and that standing up a paving/construction crew would require additional resources and sufficient project volume. Mr. Kopera confirmed that they pursue grants when available

b) Buildings & Grounds – Capital Improvements & Maintenance

The Board reviewed key Buildings & Grounds needs, including a $50,000 lobby security upgrade to better control public access to first-floor staff areas. The primary maintenance item discussed was the Municipal Center roof, which has not undergone major repair in more than 20 years and is now experiencing significant water infiltration, leaks, and interior damage. The proposed $1.1 million rehabilitation—distinct from a full replacement—would extend the roof's useful life by an estimated 25–30 years. Additional projects include ADA-compliant concrete replacement at the Municipal Center entrance and exterior stucco and minor roof repairs at the North Fire Station, for which grant funding has been requested.

Board members acknowledged the substantial cost but emphasized that the Municipal Center is heavily used by staff and the public. Staff also noted that deferring repairs will lead to continued deterioration and higher long-term expenses.

c) Information Technology (IT)

The Board reviewed proposed broadcast system upgrades to continue televising Board of Supervisors meetings and to begin broadcasting Planning Commission meetings in 2026. Maintenance items include routine computer replacements, network core switch upgrades, and replacement of mobile data computers for police and fire. Board members expressed support for expanding televised meetings to enhance transparency and public access.

d) Police Department

The Police Department presented only capital maintenance needs for 2026, with no new improvement projects proposed. Key items include body and in-car cameras, replacement of firearms and tasers, and facility repairs such as upgrades to the indoor shooting range to support regular training. Board members noted that the department consistently maximizes the useful life of vehicles and equipment, but acknowledged that timely replacement is necessary to ensure officer safety and operational reliability

e) Public Works – Facilities, Equipment & Roads

Public Works reviewed major 2026 needs, including funding to design a new facility to replace the current undersized and deteriorating building. Full construction is estimated at $4 million, and staff are pursuing grants.

Equipment improvements total about $870,000 and include replacing the street sweeper, an excavator, several grant-pending dump trucks and trailers, and an outdated, unsafe crack-sealing machine. Maintenance proposals include a significantly expanded $2 million road paving program aimed at increasing annual resurfacing from 1.3 miles to over 9 miles, with a focus on Levittown, and additional work such as line painting and footbridge repairs.

Board members acknowledged the need for these investments but emphasized identifying long-term funding strategies, particularly for the new public works facility.

f) Transportation & ADA Curb Ramps

Staff reviewed several transportation projects that are underway or planned for 2026, many supported by grant funding. These include the South Flowers Mill Road advanced warning system to reduce truck strikes, pedestrian signal upgrades along New Falls and Woodbourne Roads, and modernized school-zone flashers with speed indicators.

The Township's ADA curb ramp program remains a major need, with roughly 560 ramps currently non-compliant. At current funding levels, full compliance would take until 2053. The proposed $750,000 investment would significantly accelerate progress, allow ramps to be completed ahead of paving projects for efficiency, and enable full completion of the Cobalt Ridge neighborhood in a single year rather than through small annual increments.

g) Stormwater & MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System)

The Board reviewed several major stormwater projects for 2026, including ongoing construction in Langhorne Gables and bidding for the Reetz Avenue project. Roughly $1.94 million in expenditures are expected next year, much of which is already encumbered, and a $744,000 grant is anticipated to offset the Gables work. Additional projects include the Hillside Avenue drainage improvement—expected to be completed in-house—and design funding for upcoming stormwater projects with related grant applications underway.

MS4 water-quality requirements continue to drive significant investment. Staff requested funding for multiple stream bank restoration designs (about $150,000), which will fulfill mandated sediment-reduction goals across the Township's four watersheds. The proposed budget also triples the annual volume of inlet replacements in response to resident requests for more visible stormwater maintenance.

Staff emphasized that the stormwater fee supports both drainage projects and federally mandated MS4 water-quality work under the Clean Water Act. Because the combined cost of these projects exceeds fee revenue, the Township relies heavily on grants, phasing strategies, and efficiencies such as in-house construction where feasible.

The 2026 Maintenance repairs summary totaled $5,814,800 and the 2026 Improvements summary totaled $4,432,140. The 2026 Capital summary totaled $10,246,940.

5) Fund Sources and Grant Overview.

Staff reviewed capital funding sources, noting about $1.48 million in awarded grants already secured and roughly $3.1 million in potential grants (including about $1.2 million RDA). They explained that restricted funds and Stormwater and Fire Apparatus funds can only be used for specific purposes while the Capital Fund is an unrestricted “catch-all” with no dedicated tax source and historically relies on General Fund transfers and interest from the water/sewer investment fund. Staff are pursuing grants and exploring in-house work to stretch stormwater and capital dollars.

6) Capital & Deficit Outlook

Total 2026 capital needs are estimated at $10.2 million ($5.8M maintenance, $4.4M improvements). After earned grants and other restricted funding, net 2026 capital costs could range from about $6.5 million (worst case) to $3.15 million (best case) depending on grant success, with staff suggesting planning around 50% grant awards. When capital is combined with the projected operating deficit at current service levels, the Township faces a potential liability of roughly $7.3 million under a “maintenance-only, no new grants” scenario, and up to about $11.5 million if all proposed operating and capital increases are funded with no additional grants, potentially reduced to around $8.1–$8.2 million with strong grant performance.

7) Other Business.

Staff outlined next steps in the budget process:

The proposed 2026 budget will be presented on November 17, followed by a planned public budget town hall in early December. Board members praised staff, department directors, and the budget team for delivering a clear, accessible, and highly detailed budget process.

The Board encouraged residents to reach out directly with feedback outside formal meetings. The session concluded with no further business and adjournment.

8) Adjournment.

Mr. Ksiazek adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.