

Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
Monday, January 12, 2026, 7:00p.m.
Middletown Township Municipal Complex

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Hannah called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m. and led the audience in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Mr. Gallardo called the role. Supervisors Hannah, Kane, Ksiazek, Leighton, and Gallardo were in attendance. Also present were Township Manager Eden Ratliff, Assistant Manager Nick Valla, Solicitor Jim Esposito, and Engineer Isaac Kessler and various other department heads.

3. Sophia Barone

Ms. Hannah introduced Sophia Barone, a local student, and the daughter of Ms. Hannah. Ms. Barone beautifully sang the Star-Spangled Banner.

4. Upcoming Meetings/Events

Ms. Hannah announced that the Board of Supervisors will meet next on Monday February 9, 2026, at 7:00p.m.

5. Public Comment

Lance Segers, Queen Lily Road, made comments to the Board of Supervisors regarding the process of receiving feedback from the public and allowing it to inform the policy making process. He referenced the public input process during the waste disposal contract negotiations and budget development. He stated that he feels the Board of Supervisors does not always take the action consistent with public feedback and encouraged the Board to remember and listen to the public who voted for them.

Mark Shapcott of Highland Ave, inquired with the Board and staff about a construction project happening on his street which he believes is adding drainage to the neighborhood. He also noted concerns with a potentially failing drain as well as erosion and sediment control during the project. Ratliff noted that staff will connect with him post meeting.

Andrew Schifferli, Chief of the Pennadel-Middletown Emergency Squad, addressed the Board and provided many thanks for the additional funding provided to the squad in 2026. The additional funding will support operations at the squad including an additional ambulance on the weekend. He also provided appreciation for Redevelopment Authority grant application on the squad's behalf.

6. Consent Agenda Items

- a. Consideration of authorizing payment of January 12, 2025, Bills List in the amount of \$1,102,619.58.
- b. Consideration of approving December 15-17, 2025, Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Middletown Township Board of Supervisors.
- c. Consideration of authorizing Resolutions #26-1R - 26-6R accepting grant awards from the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority (RDA).
- d. Consideration of authorizing Resolution #26-7R authorizing application to the Bucks County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.
- e. Consideration of authorizing purchase of five (5) Police vehicles from Fred Beans Ford of Doylestown, PA, and upfitting from SKD Tryon's Emergency Vehicle Upfitting of Croydon, PA, in a combined amount of \$326,775.00.
- f. Consideration of authorizing Financial Security Release #1 – Final – CFT Plaza.
- g. Consideration of authorizing advertisement of an amendment to the Police Department Ordinance, removing job descriptions from codification.

Action: On a Ksiazek/Leighton motion, the Board unanimously approved the consent agenda.

7. Consideration of Preliminary/Final Subdivision and Land Development Approval for a two-lot subdivision and construction of an additional dwelling at 164 S. Walnut Terrace, Langhorne, PA, TMP 22-008-169, A/LD #25-11, R-2 Zoning District.

Director of Building and Zoning Jim Ennis gave an overview of plan and referenced his incorporated Policy Briefing Summary which provides a detailed overview. The plan is a simple subdivision that allows a second unit to be built. The applicant received a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board to build on a lot smaller than 10,000 sq/ft.

Joe Fitch of Wyoming Ave expressed his ongoing frustrations with the Township allowing people to build on undersized lots. Ratliff explained that the applicant received a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board who has jurisdiction over that question, not the Board of Supervisors. Ratliff proceeded to explain the role of the Zoning Hearing Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors, each who have different roles in the land development process. Fitch expressed his displeasure with some decisions of the Zoning Hearing Board.

Lance Sagers of Queen Lily Road provided his opinion of the roles of the Zoning Hearing Board and Board of Supervisors in the land development review process. Eric Bruno of Sweetgum Road stated he believed the majority of lots in the neighborhood in question were larger than what was being proposed and referenced Zillow on his mobile phone. The applicant's attorney disagreed. Bruno inquired about whether or not the applicant was being given relief from any regulations regarding trees or the urban canopy. It was stated that no relief from these regulations was being requested.

Action: On a Ksiazek/Gallardo motion the Board voted unanimously to grant Subdivision and Land Development Plan approval for the 164 S. Walnut Terrace

two lot subdivision and construction of an additional dwelling, S/LD #25-11, with the following conditions:

1. Applicants shall comply in full with all requirements of the Middletown Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Middletown Township Zoning Ordinance, unless relief was granted by the body having jurisdiction.
2. Any remaining review comments shall be addressed in full.

8. Discussion of Drafting a Public Comment Policy

Solicitor Jim Esposito gave an overview of the regulations pertinent to the Board setting a public comment policy stating the Sunshine Act was most relevant to the discussion as well as some free speech provisions. He referenced his incorporated memo and noted that the Board can reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner, of public comment, as well as differentiating between taxpayers and non-taxpayers.

Ms. Kane noted that she would like to see taxpayers be able to speak on agenda items and noted the importance of their voice. Ms. Hannah agreed.

Ms. Ksiazek noted that he is not opposed to a time limit and explained the difficulty of running a meeting when there are no guardrails and that regulations might make the meetings more desirable to attend. He further stated that there might be value in separating taxpayers and non-taxpayers.

Mr. Leighton noted that there is value in hearing from non-residents as Middletown residents may have the opportunity to speak at meetings in other municipalities. He explained his experience of speaking at a Newtown Twp meeting over a sewer matter.

Eric Bruno of Sweetgum Road praised the legal memo provided by Esposito and also noted that he (Bruno) provided his own sample policy for consideration by the Board. Bruno explained that there was a lot of public participation in 2025 and that democracy is a continuous process. He values the call and response process that exists with the Board now and would like to see that continue, rather than a courtroom style where the Board does not respond to the public. Bruno recommended a public filibuster option where the public can reasonably stop an issue they find "detestable" and emphasized the importance of the public in the legislative process. Bruno and Ratliff had a brief exchange about how some communities have a Town Hall style of government and others may be influenced by the Quaker Church. Bruno later reminded the Board they are not parents of the public.

Lance Sagers of Queen Lily Road recommended putting non-taxpayers at the end of the comment period because they are not paying for the government. Sagers explained that he wants the ability to come to meetings and complain and suggested that the Board must have other priorities than this topic. He asked who this policy benefits?

Ms. Kane thanked Ms. Hannah for this discussion, and Ms. Hannah explained the rest of the process. The solicitor was asked to provide sample policies as options for additional discussion.

9. Consideration of Authorizing an Employment Agreement for Township Manager, Eden Ratliff.

The Board introduced the topic of an employment agreement for the Township Manager, Eden Ratliff.

Eric Bruno of Sweetgum Road noted that although Mr. Ratliff has been here for a short time, he has become pretty important to Middletown Township.

Ms. Kane thanks Mr. Ratliff and noted that he is a hard worker for the Township. Ms. Hannah agreed, thanked Mr. Ratliff, and discussed his drive for continuous transparency. Mr. Ksiazek noted that Mr. Ratliff is a tireless worker and gives everything he has to the Township.

Mr. Ratliff thanked the Board and community for their very kind comments. He noted it is an honor to serve Middletown Township and appreciates the opportunity to do it with a wonderful team. He looks forward to a long successful career in Middletown, Township.

Action: On a Ksiazek/Kane motion the Board voted unanimously to approve the employment agreement for Township Manager, Eden Ratliff.

10. Consideration of authorizing Resolution #26-8R updating the Township Fee Schedule.

Director of Finance Laura Hucklebridge gave an overview of the Township Fee Schedule which is being proposed with minor adjustments. A policy briefing summary is incorporated and lists each fee the Township charges and the proposed change. Hucklebridge noted a few areas of considerable financial loss the Township experienced in 2025 because the fees are not high enough to cover their costs. The Township lost over \$70,000 in Zoning Hearing Board continuance costs and \$50,000 in credit card fees that are not charged back to the payer. These are addressed in the new fee schedule.

Mr. Leighton inquired about the volume of permit and hearing applications and if the volume is higher than usual. Mr. Ratliff and Mr. Ennis replied that the volume is relatively consistent.

Action: On a Hannah/Kane motion, the Board voted unanimously to adopt Resolution #26-R updating the Township Fee Schedule.

11. Consideration of authorizing advertisement of an ordinance to amend Chapters 190 and 3636 of the Township Code of Ordinances.

Mr. Ennis gave an overview of the proposed change in ordinance and referenced his incorporated policy briefing summary. Chapter 190 and 363 are a reflection of model ordinances from the state. When those codes are updated than the Township codes

need to be updated to reflect the changes. In addition, Mr. Ennis is recommending the Board adopt the provision of the code that regulates structures under 1,000 sq/ft which are currently exempt from building codes. Action would be for the solicitor to draft and advertise the ordinances to reflect the updates to the state code and consider them at a future meeting.

Ms. Hannah inquired into why the Township's codes cannot automatically update, and Mr. Esposito explained that such action is in violation of standing case law.

Mr. Ratliff reviewed the steps the Township will take to notify contractors of the updates.

Action: On a Kane/Leighton motion the Board voted unanimously to authorize advertisement of an ordinance to amend Chapters 190 and 3636 of the Township Code of Ordinances.

12. Discussion of amending the Sign Ordinance

Mr. Esposito gave an overview of a Supreme Court Case that requires the Township to amend its sign ordinance as certain provisions are unconstitutional. The new law requires that the Township disallow temporary signs, which are most frequently real estate for sale signs, and political signs, to be placed in the Township Right of Way.

Ms. Kane clarified what needs to change in the ordinance in that small temporary signs need not be placed in the right of way.

Mr. Ratliff explains the process of enforcement and concerns with the future of enforcing this change, especially if temporary signs need to be issued a permit.

Mr. Leighton explained that he is concerned about requiring residents to apply for permits for temporary signs and questioned the process of applying for permits.

Mr. Kessler explained what the right of way is and tricks as to how the average resident might find it.

Helene Ratner explained that she hates temporary signs especially when people put them in concrete triangle medians as they inevitably blow away and into the road. She supports an ordinance change requiring them to be out of the right of way.

Eric Bruno of Sweetgum Road asked the Solicitor to provide the relevant cases and suggested all temporary signs be banned.

Mr. Esposito noted that temporary signs cannot be banned but the Township can permit them and set the permit fee at a reasonable level.

Ms. Kane questioned the new costs associated with the needed changes and Mr. Ratliff explained that the Township might consider not permitting these but having a regulation consistent with law and enforcing it in a more cost-effective manner.

13. Consideration of rejecting bids and re-authorizing advertisement of bid specifications for the Reetz Avenue Culvert Replacement Project.

Ms. Keesler gave an overview of the Reetz Avenue project, which is outlined in an incorporated policy briefing summary, and noted that bids came in over \$200,000 the budgeted amount of \$450,000. Mr. Keesler noted that the budget was not high enough but that the bids received seem to be consistent with market pricing. He recommended the bids be rejected and rebid as pricing may come back more competitive and a lower cost, though likely greater than the budgeted amount.

Mr. Keesler, Ms. Kane, and Mr. Ratliff outlined that part of the increase in cost is due to a water line that needs to be moved which the Bucks County Service Authority did not make known to the Township until after the budget was set. Mr. Ratliff explained that this is a priority project that has been put in an out of the budget for years which has led to its cost continuing to increase.

Ms. Gallardo clarified the rebidding process with Mr. Keesler.

Eric Bruno of Sweetgum Road suggested the Township ask the Borough of Hulmeville to contribute to the cost of the project.

Action: On a Kane/Ksiazek motion the Board voted unanimously to reject all bids and re-authorize advertisement of bid specifications for the Reetz Avenue Culvert Replacement Project.

14. Consideration of awarding Armour & Sons Electric, Inc., of Langhorne, PA, an amount of \$89,745 for the Maple Avenue/N. Flowers Mill Road Signal Improvement Project.

Mr. Valla gave an overview of the primarily grant funded project which is outlined in an incorporated Policy Briefing Summary.

Action: On a Leighton/Kane motion the Board voted unanimously to award Armour & Sons Electric, Inc., of Langhorne, PA, an amount of \$89,745 for the Maple Avenue/N. Flowers Mill Road Signal Improvement Project.

15. Department Reports

Mr. Ratliff explained that starting in 2026 the Township departments will be providing written and verbal reports to the Board of Supervisors to continue the Township's commitment to transparency and community education. Oral reports were provided by the Township Manager, Eden Ratliff, Chief of Police Joe Bartorilla, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, Patrick Graham, Human Resources Director, Melissa Gargan, and Township Engineer, Isaac Keesler. All written reports are incorporated herein.

16. Public Comment

None.

17. Other Business

Mr. Gallardo read the following prepared statement: "I want to speak briefly about December 23rd, when the Middletown Township Fire and Police Departments executed a coordinated and rapid mutual-aid response to support operations at the Bristol Health & Rehab Center explosion. All Middletown Township fire companies responded and actively assisted with evacuation, fire suppression, and rescue efforts as part of the regional emergency response. While units were committed at the scene, two Middletown Township fire stations staffed volunteer duty crews to maintain full emergency coverage throughout the township until all equipment was released. Middletown Township police officers also supported the incident by securing the perimeter and managing scene safety. Middletown Township's emergency services and first responders are vital to the safety and well-being of our community, standing ready 24/7 to protect lives, property, and provide critical assistance when our residents need it most. I just wanted a minute to recognize them all."

Mr. Leighton made overwhelmingly positive comments about the Township's commitment to transparency and public education.

Ms. Hannah thanked the Township staff and Board of Supervisors for their commitment to transparency and the community.

Action: On a Ksiazek/Kane motion the meeting adjourned at 10:03p.m.