

**MINUTES OF THE OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
UPPER DEERFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, HELD ON
THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
HIGHWAY 77, SEABROOK, NEW JERSEY, PURSUANT TO NOTICE**

Present were John Daddario, James Crilley, Thomas Speranza, Joseph Spoltore, and William Whelan all being members of the Township Committee. Also present were Rocco Tedesco, Solicitor; Brian Murphy, Township Engineer; Roy Spoltore, Township Administrator/Clerk; Janeen Rossi, Tax Collector/Deputy Clerk; Amy Colaneri, CFO; and Chad Ott, Public Works Supervisor.

The meeting was called to order by Committeeman John Daddario, and he read the following public meeting announcement.

"In compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act", written advance notice of the time, date and place of the meeting, has been given at least forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting by mailing same to the News of Cumberland County and The Press, Cumberland County Edition, by posting the notice in the Municipal Building at Seabrook, New Jersey, and by filing such notice with the Township Clerk, in compliance with said Act." In compliance with State Fire Safety Statutes, Mr. Daddario instructed those present how to exit the room in an emergency.

Invocation was given by Deputy Mayor Crilley and the flag salute was led by Thomas Speranza.

At this time John Daddario, Chairman opened the meeting for public comment. Mandy, a resident of Pittsgrove, stated that the posted speed limit on Pindale Drive is 40 MPH. Her concern is that there are children playing in the area, multiple school bus stops and the speed limit is too high for the residential area. She has witnessed vehicles speeding during school bus times. Mr. Speranza stated that the road is a county road, and the speed limit would be controlled by the county. He will send a Sheriff officer out to conduct traffic enforcement. Mayor Daddario suggested contacting both Salem and Cumberland Counties to have them review the speed limit on Pindale Drive.

With no other public comments, John Daddario, Chairman called for the approval of minutes for the meeting of February 20, 2025. Thomas Speranza made a motion, second by Joseph Spoltore, to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to accept the minutes as received, were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

John Daddario, Chairman called for a discussion and introduction of an ordinance entitled, Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish a Cap Bank (N.J.S.A 40A: 4-45.14) The Clerk read the proposed Ordinance by title. Roy Spoltore stated this enables the local budget appropriation to be 3.5% rather than 2.5%. On motion of William Whelan, seconded by Thomas Speranza to approve and adopt proposed ordinance on first reading and setting the date for public hearing on March 20, 2025, at 7:00 pm and was carried 5-0 on a roll call vote. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to advertise same in the Daily Journal as required by law and copies to be made available upon request.

INSERT ORDINANCE

John Daddario, Chairman called for a resolution Abatement for Improvement, Conversion or Construction of Property- Zawa Upper Deerfield LLC. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Joseph Spoltore, seconded by James Crilley, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

John Daddario, Chairman called for a resolution Abatement for Improvement, Conversion of Property- Bruce & Debra Riley. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by James Crilley, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

John Daddario, Chairman called for a resolution Amending the 2025 Temporary Budget of the Township of Upper Deerfield- 1. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of William Whelan, seconded by Thomas Speranza, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

INSERT RESOLUTION

John Daddario, Chairman called for a resolution Payment of Bills in the amount of \$866,936.20. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of James Crilley, seconded by Thomas Speranza, to approve and adopt said resolution, unanimously carried 5-0 on a roll call vote with Joseph Spoltore abstaining from Payment to Cumberland Regional.

INSERT RESOLUTION

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

William Whelan stated that the Draft Budget addresses many of the Townships Capital needs and there no local tax rate increase is proposed. The local program Love Where You Live that Mr. Crilley has been talking about is sponsored by an anonymous family with the goal to improve the positivity of western Cumberland County. Mr. Whelan provided Mr. Murphy with draft sign designs that Deerfield Township is proposing.

Deputy Mayor Crilley stated the Live Where You Love Grant is a tremendous opportunity to express pride within the Community. This is a great project that could focus on the Carlls Corner area to promote the business district. Mr. Crilley reported that he participated in the Read Across America at Cumberland Regional for First Grade students. It was a great opportunity to inspire the students to read books and learn new activities such as disco dancing.

Joseph Spoltore stated that the Environmental Commission Meeting finalized their goals and discussed the five-year plan for the Muyon Property. The Planning Board will meet on Monday March 10th. The proposed new Lassonde Pappas manufacturing plant is on the agenda for technical review of the site plan. He added that a semi-pro football team was looking at renting the field but did not have the appropriate insurance coverage.

Thomas Speranza stated the search & rescue squad at Station 33 was out in Salem County looking for a missing person. They are doing a great job assisting various entities in the area. The Sheriff's traffic enforcement will continue along major highways in Upper Deerfield.

Mayor Daddario stated that Little League needed sponsorships. He posted a request on social media for sponsors and within a day had more than enough to cover all the needs of Little League. The local business owners and residents consistently come together in times of need to make life better for the children and residents. There are over 170 kids signed up for Little League.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Roy Spoltore stated the Election Board asked if the Township wanted to use the same polling places as last year. The Committee agreed to continue to use Fire company 1 and 3 and the Senior Center. Perdue has a Tax Appeal, and they have submitted an appraisal of their property. The Tax Assessor received a proposal from Sockler Realty to provide an appraisal on Perdue in the amount of \$4,500. The committee unanimously approved

the proposal. The newsletter will be drafted and printed by the end of March. The 2025 Draft Budget does not include a local tax rate increase. Upper Deerfield was one of two municipalities whose ratio did not drop and will remain flat. It appears that the total tax rate could decrease in 2025. The Tax Collection rate last year was 96.96%. The general surplus decreased by \$71,000 and the utility surplus increased \$156,000. The budget increase of \$336,000 is primarily due to street lighting, health benefit, utility and salary increases as well as increasing capital improvements by 217,000. The first of the long-term tax exemptions will occur in 2026 and the Township will need to address the purchase of another ambulance, roll off truck and payments for the fire trucks. The budget will be introduced at the next meeting on March 20th, and adoption is scheduled for April 17th.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Brian Murphy stated he met with Doug Witaker, County Engineer, to discuss upgrading the 6" water line on Parsonage Road to a 12" line. The new Lassonde Pappas manufacturing plant requires a larger main and this increase in pipe will tie into the 12" line coming down Foster and tying into the new Seabrook Water Tower. The construction of the Seabrook Water Tower is almost entirely completed. Removal of the old water tower will be completed after the Verizon lines

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Rocco Tedesco, Solicitor, stated he met with Brian Slaugh, Consulting Planner from Clarke Caton Hintz, P.C., in reference to a conference scheduled for next week about the Round 4 Affordable Housing numbers from DCA to review the Township's strategy. A challenge on the Township's submitted number for prospective need and present need was received from the NJ Builders Association and Fair Share Housing. The attorney for Bristol Ponds has asked about the terminology for an agreement to run a water line under the railroad. Joe Ragno has had discussions with the Lassonde Pappas redevelopment attorney for the redevelopment and financial agreements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy Ridgeway, resident of Upper Deerfield, stated she appreciates all the hard work that went into the budget and is glad there is no increase in local taxes. Dean Hawk, resident of Upper Deerfield, asked why there is a second water tower. Brian Murphy explained that it is for redundancy and provides sufficient storage for Township needs.

With no further public comments and no further business to come before the Committee Chairman John Daddario, called for a resolution Authorizing Closed Session to discuss litigation and matters requiring attorney client privilege. Mayor Daddario stated no action will be taken. The Clerk read the resolution by title. On motion of James Crilley, seconded by Thomas Speranza to approve and adopt resolution, and unanimously carried.

INSERT RESOLUTION

The Committee reopened the public portion of the meeting on a motion by James Crilley, seconded by Thomas Speranza and unanimously carried.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Thomas Speranza, seconded by Joseph Spoltore, to adjourn, unanimously carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Janeen Rossi, Deputy Township Clerk

Roy J. Spoltore, Township Clerk