

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
JULY 9, 2026 – 6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER / PUBLIC NOTICE

Mayor Talarico called the Regular Session Meeting of the Maple Shade Township Council to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public notice of the meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, was given by notifying the Township Clerk on December 23, 2025; posting notice on the Municipal website; and posting notice on the official Municipal Bulletin Board on December 23, 2025. The Mayor advised that members of the public would be permitted to address Council during the designated public participation portions and that the draft agenda had been posted on the Township webpage and Municipal Building bulletin board.

ROLL CALL

Councilman Kauffman	Present
Councilwoman Nunes	Present
Councilman Simonsick	Present
Councilman Zahradnick	Present
Mayor Talarico	Present

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING

The Board of Health meeting was opened. Township Manager Susan Danson reported that the Board of Health received one mold complaint and one standing-water complaint during the reporting period and that both matters had been closed.

Manager Danson provided seasonal public health and safety reminders. Residents were encouraged to check on elderly neighbors and others vulnerable to extreme heat and humidity; eliminate stagnant water in birdbaths, flowerpots, buckets and gutters to reduce mosquito breeding; and secure outdoor items, including umbrellas and basketball equipment, in preparation for summer storms involving heavy rain and strong winds.

The Board of Health public portion was opened. No members of the public appeared to comment.

A motion was made and seconded to close the Board of Health public portion. All were in favor.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the Board of Health meeting. All were in favor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-R-116 – APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OF POLICE

Council considered Resolution No. 2026-R-116, appointing Brian Weiss as Chief of Police for the Maple Shade Police Department.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2026-R-116.

Councilman Kauffman	Yes
Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	Yes
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

Resolution No. 2026-R-116 was adopted.

OATH OF OFFICE – CHIEF BRIAN WEISS

Following adoption of the appointment resolution, Chief Brian Weiss was sworn into office. Chief Weiss took the constitutional oath, affirming that he would support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the governments established under the authority of the people, and faithfully, impartially and justly perform all duties of the Office of Chief of Police to the best of his ability.

Chief Weiss thanked the Township Manager and elected officials for placing their confidence in him. He reflected that he joined the Maple Shade Police Department in 1996 and, at that time, could not have imagined that he would one day be entrusted with leading the agency. He assured Council and the community that the Department would continue to report for duty each day, put its best foot forward and provide the best possible service to Maple Shade. Chief Weiss also thanked the community for its support, his family for being present, and Chief Tom Reinhold of the Evesham Township Police Department for attending and for the close working relationship between the departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-R-117 – EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council considered Resolution No. 2026-R-117 authorizing an Executive Session to discuss matters required by state or federal law or rules of court to remain confidential and matters related to contract negotiations.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt Resolution No. 2026-R-117 and enter Executive Session. All were in favor.

Council entered Executive Session at approximately 6:35 p.m. and returned to open session at approximately 7:02 p.m. No formal action was taken during Executive Session.

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-R-118 – AMENDMENT TO CAPITAL BUDGET

Council considered Resolution No. 2026-R-118 amending the Township Capital Budget. During discussion, a question was raised regarding language that appeared open-ended and whether the Township was approving projects before finalizing the budget. Manager Danson explained that the resolution amended a prior capital budget to reallocate older available capital funds, as discussed with the Township's financial professional at the previous meeting, including making additional funding available for Department of Public Works equipment such as a dump truck. She clarified that the subsequent bond ordinances addressed the new capital authorizations.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2026-R-118.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	Yes
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

Resolution No. 2026-R-118 was adopted.

ORDINANCES – INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

Ordinance No. 2026-08 – Bond ordinance providing for various 2026 general capital improvements in and for the Township of Maple Shade, appropriating \$2,572,779, including three grants in the aggregate amount of \$1,027,007, and authorizing the issuance of approximately \$1,471,135 in bonds or notes to finance a portion of the cost thereof.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Ordinance No. 2026-08 on introduction and first reading.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	No
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

Ordinance No. 2026-08 was approved on first reading. Publication was scheduled for July 13, 2026, and the public hearing was scheduled for August 6, 2026.

Ordinance No. 2026-09 – Bond ordinance providing for various 2026 utility capital improvements in and for the Township of Maple Shade, appropriating \$2,092,000, including a grant in the amount of \$1,092,000, and authorizing the issuance of \$952,276 in bonds or notes to finance a portion of the cost thereof.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Ordinance No. 2026-09 on introduction and first reading.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	No
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

Ordinance No. 2026-09 was approved on first reading. Publication was scheduled for July 13, 2026, and the public hearing was scheduled for August 6, 2026.

Ordinance No. 2026-10 – Bond ordinance providing for various water system equipment in and for the Township of Maple Shade, appropriating \$1,400,000 and authorizing the issuance of \$1,400,000 in bonds or notes to finance the cost thereof.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Ordinance No. 2026-10 on introduction and first reading.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	No
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

Ordinance No. 2026-10 was approved on first reading. Publication was scheduled for July 13, 2026, and the public hearing was scheduled for August 6, 2026.

Ordinance No. 2026-11 – Ordinance amending Chapter 205 of the Municipal Code of the Township of Maple Shade by establishing outdoor lighting standards within Chapter 205, Article XXIV.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Ordinance No. 2026-11 on introduction and first reading.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	Yes
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

Ordinance No. 2026-11 was approved on first reading. Publication was scheduled for July 13, 2026, and the public hearing was scheduled for August 6, 2026.

PUBLIC PORTION – CONSENT AGENDA

The public portion regarding the Consent Agenda was opened. No members of the public appeared to comment.

A motion was made and seconded to close the Consent Agenda public portion. All were in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA – RESOLUTIONS NO. 2026-R-119 THROUGH 2026-R-132

Council considered Resolutions No. 2026-R-119 through 2026-R-132. The Consent Agenda included, among other items reflected in the final meeting packet, approval of an Elm Avenue block-party road closure; tax-exempt status and cancellation of taxes for Block 94, Lot 9.01; appointment of Sean Martin to the Maple Shade Police Department and authorization for his attendance at the Gloucester County Police Academy; amendment of the 2026 Township Council meeting schedule to change the August Regular Meeting date; and authorization of a preliminary investigation referenced as Resolution No. 2026-R-123.

During discussion, Councilman Simonsick questioned why the August Council meeting date was being changed after the annual schedule had been established. It was explained that the change had been discussed at the prior meeting because of scheduling conflicts affecting members of Council and that August 6 had been agreed upon. Councilman Simonsick stated for the record that Council knew the meeting dates at the beginning of the year and that he did not believe it was fair to residents to change the schedule to accommodate vacations.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolutions No. 2026-R-119 through 2026-R-132.

Resolutions No. 2026-R-119 through 2026-R-132 were adopted.

APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE LIST

Manager Danson presented the expenditure list and advised that the General Capital Fund amount had been revised to include J.H. Williams for the Police Department. She stated that she had reviewed the bills as submitted and recommended payment when funds were available.

Current Fund	\$3,459,796.62
Utility Fund	\$391,928.54
General Capital Fund	\$309,749.18
Utility Capital Fund	\$240,557.48
Trust Fund	\$314,127.25
Grant Fund	\$11,923.29

A motion was made and seconded to approve the expenditure list.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
Councilman Simonsick	Yes
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

The expenditure list was approved.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 2026 MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the June 2026 meeting minutes.

Councilwoman Nunes	Yes
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Councilman Simonsick	Yes
Councilman Zahradnick	Yes
Mayor Talarico	Yes

The June 2026 meeting minutes were approved.

PUBLIC PORTION

Joanne Mortimer 39 Lanci Road commented on Resolution No. 2026-R-123 and the proposed preliminary investigation involving the Township Planner and Land Use Board. The resident stated that buildings within the Watergate condominium complex had experienced settlement approximately eight to ten years earlier, resulting in substantial reconstruction costs borne by condominium owners, and that settlement concerns had reportedly arisen again. The resident urged the Township and its engineers to investigate those conditions and complete appropriate studies before disturbing property in the vicinity of Watergate.

Dawn Burns of 66 South Poplar Avenue continued the discussion from the prior meeting concerning leaf collection. The resident stated that removal of leaves generated on private property should be the property owner's responsibility rather than a service funded by all taxpayers and suggested that the approximately \$18,000 expended for leaf collection could be returned to the budget to provide relief to families facing high food costs.

President Nick Diniglio of the Independent Fire Company, identifying an address of 605 North Coles Avenue, stated that the organization had not heard from Council since its last interaction and submitted copies of the Independent Fire Company's expenditure information for the prior two years to Council and Township staff.

No other members of the public appeared to comment.

A motion was made and seconded to close the public portion. All were in favor.

STAFF AND PROFESSIONAL COMMENTS

Councilman Simonsick commented that the Independence Day fireworks had been moved to Sunday because of the weather and expressed hope that residents who attended enjoyed the event despite the unfavorable conditions.

Councilman Zahradnick had no comments.

Council offered condolences to the family of Jeffrey Nace, described as a longtime resident and supporter of the community.

Mayor Talarico announced that Coffee with a Vet would begin Monday, July 13, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Municipal Building and invited veterans and members of the public to attend.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Operations -Manager Danson reported that Township staff continued to deliver essential municipal services while advancing operational initiatives and capital improvement projects. Construction activity and roadway and infrastructure projects remained ongoing. Township Administration, the Department of Public Works, the consulting engineer and legal counsel continued to address concerns related to the Buttonwood drainage improvement project and to monitor contractor compliance.

The Recreation Department successfully hosted the annual Independence Day fireworks after weather conditions required changes to the event. Although the parade was cancelled, the decision was made in the interest of public safety. Manager Danson thanked the Recreation Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works, Fire Department, EMS personnel, volunteers and community

organizations for their work in making the event successful. Preparations continued for the remaining summer events, including Concerts in the Park.

Public Works continued seasonal maintenance throughout June, including roadway repairs, storm sewer maintenance, park and playground upkeep, landscaping, recycling operations, event support, and maintenance of Township facilities, vehicles and public infrastructure while responding to routine service requests.

Manager Danson reported that, while the Municipal Building was closed on July 3, a serious HVAC leak caused significant water intrusion in the rear of the courtroom and into the library below. Township staff spent approximately seven hours addressing the incident. She thanked the Township's HVAC contractor for responding immediately and assisting with the emergency and cleanup.

Maple Shade EMS responded to 304 calls during June, bringing the year-to-date total to 1,670 emergency calls. Common incidents continued to include medical emergencies, falls, respiratory emergencies, cardiac-related calls, motor vehicle crashes and psychiatric emergencies. EMS continued providing service to residents and visitors twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week.

The Community Development Department completed 153 residential CCO inspections during June, consisting of 127 apartment inspections, 19 single-family home inspections and seven condominium inspections. The Department also continued addressing property maintenance, zoning enforcement, construction inspections and redevelopment matters.

The Township welcomed Patrick Hegarty as the new Tax Collector on June 29. Manager Danson stated that his experience, leadership and dedication would assist in modernizing and automating Tax Office operations and improving resident service. Year-to-date tax collections exceeded \$25.3 million, and water and sewer collections exceeded \$4.39 million.

2. POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Weiss reported on an October incident at Jay's Elbow Room on Route 73 in which an altercation between two patrons escalated into an exchange of gunfire in the parking lot in the presence of bystanders. One individual fired nine rounds in the direction of traffic on Route 73. Both subjects were identified and charged following a joint investigation by the Maple Shade Police Department and Burlington County Prosecutor's Office. One defendant recently pleaded guilty to a second-degree weapons offense and was expected to receive a five-year state-prison sentence at a hearing scheduled for August 28. Chief Weiss commended the investigating officers for their diligence and professionalism.

Chief Weiss also reported that on June 17, Hopewell Township Police requested assistance locating a suspect involved in a domestic assault and unlawful taking of a vehicle who had eluded several law-enforcement agencies. A Maple Shade officer located the occupied vehicle in the AutoZone parking lot on Collins Road. Maple Shade and Mount Laurel officers developed a plan to arrest the suspect while the vehicle was stationary; however, the suspect refused commands and used the vehicle as a weapon while fleeing. The suspect struck one Maple Shade police vehicle and two Mount Laurel police vehicles. A Mount Laurel officer was pinned between a vehicle door and frame and sustained minor injuries. The vehicle was later recovered from an unrelated third party and impounded for execution of a search warrant. The suspect was identified and charged with assault on police, eluding, criminal mischief, obstructing the administration of law and hindering apprehension.

Chief Weiss reviewed recent personnel changes. On June 30, a walkout ceremony was held for retiring Chief Fletcher and Corporal Rob Bennett. Sergeant Pacheco also retired that day but was unable to attend. Chief Weiss congratulated all three retirees. Following the retirements, Dan O'Brien was promoted to Captain; Scott Wallace was promoted to Lieutenant; Justin Jericho and Jeffrey Engel were promoted to Patrol Sergeant; Ron Soha was appointed School Resource Officer Corporal to replace

Corporal Bennett; Diego Alvarez was appointed Detective Corporal; and Justin Warsaw was assigned to the Detective Bureau.

Chief Weiss reported that command staff attended the June 18 graduation of Officer Joseph Donofrio from the Gloucester County Police Academy. Officer Donofrio, formerly a Class I officer with Maple Shade, was performing well in the field-training program and was expected to complete training in early fall. Chief Weiss also congratulated Sean Martin on his selection as the Department's newest recruit officer. Mr. Martin was scheduled to enter the Gloucester County Police Academy the following month with anticipated graduation in December.

The Police Department continued its reaccreditation process through the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police. The final assessment was scheduled for August 10 and would include two active police chiefs reviewing the Department's compliance with accreditation policies, procedures and best practices. A report would then be submitted to the State Chiefs Accreditation Board, with the Department expected to appear before the Board in October 2026.

For June, the Police Department handled 2,370 calls for service, averaging approximately 79 calls per day. Reported activity included 38 domestic incidents, 77 motor vehicle crashes, 340 property checks, 18 shoplifting incidents, 64 suspicious-activity calls, 22 thefts, 287 traffic stops, 21 trespassing complaints and 93 well-being complaints or checks.

Chief Weiss announced that National Night Out would be held Tuesday, August 4, at the high school. The event would provide free family activities, food and games. He encouraged residents to attend.

Chief Weiss reported the July 2 passing of retired Lieutenant Jim Roselle and extended condolences to his family. He indicated that the family wished to maintain privacy and that no public service information was available.

3. ENGINEER REPORTS

No separate Engineer's Report was presented.

4. SUSTAINABLE MAPLE SHADE

It was announced that the farmers market would be held the following evening from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the gazebo.

5. BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (BEDC)

Manager Danson referred Council to a memorandum and the current BEDC ordinance. She reported that the Commission had held a productive discussion regarding its future direction and support needs. Potential ordinance amendments included adding or ensuring representation from Main Street Maple Shade, the Train Station Commission, a student representative, additional corporate interests and broader community organizations. Main Street Maple Shade had agreed to attend the next meeting, and discussions had also occurred with the Maple Shade Business Association.

Manager Danson suggested that, rather than naming each organization in the ordinance, the Township could establish designated seats for community organizations. She recommended consideration of a student ambassador and emphasized the importance of a formal Main Street partnership while clarifying that the proposal was not intended to merge the organizations or take away their independence. Rather, the goal was to ensure coordinated planning and a voice at the table.

Staffing and liaison options discussed included directing the Township Manager or a designee to serve as the economic-development liaison; establishing a full-time or part-time coordinator; exploring a shared service; or considering a grant-funded position. Manager Danson expressed concern about reliance on grant funding because the position could lose continuity if grant funds ended.

Manager Danson also recommended simplifying the Commission's membership. The current ordinance provided for 13 voting members, two ex officio members and four at-large members, creating a 19-member body. She suggested reducing voting membership to approximately 11 or 13 members and using advisory liaisons where appropriate. She also recommended updating the ordinance's reference to the vacant Director of Business and Economic Development position so that the Township Manager, a designee, or an economic-development coordinator, if established, could fulfill that role.

The Commission had also requested clearer expectations and measurable goals. Manager Danson suggested an annual work plan establishing January priorities, goals, events and legislative recommendations, followed by an annual performance report. She stated that this would provide accountability and help define whether the Commission should function primarily as an advisory body, event-planning body, economic-development body, or a combination of those functions.

Council discussed retaining a volunteer-based model. One Council member stated that the former advisory-board structure had been successful and that recommendations could be presented publicly to Council for decision, without immediately creating a new paid position. Manager Danson clarified that the Commission itself would remain volunteer-based but that members had expressed a need for administrative guidance and a point of contact who could communicate with developers and businesses during normal business hours.

Council discussed the role of modern technology and whether email and other communications could reduce the need for staff. Manager Danson advised that no immediate hiring decision was requested and that the Township should proceed deliberately, evaluate options and determine the Commission's responsibilities before deciding on staffing. She emphasized that volunteers often operate their own businesses or have other obligations and cannot consistently conduct daytime outreach, business recruitment, vacancy assistance and retention activities without support.

Council asked how meetings involving multiple organizations would be structured and who would lead them. Manager Danson explained that the former Director served as chair under the existing ordinance, with a volunteer vice-chair, and that she had temporarily assumed responsibility for agendas and meeting facilitation so meetings could continue. Approximately 14 members had attended the latest meeting, and three vacancies remained. She stated that the vacancies provided an opportunity to revise the membership categories before making new appointments.

Council members were invited to attend Commission meetings, subject to Open Public Meetings Act requirements and the avoidance of Council deliberation outside a properly noticed Council meeting. The next BEDC meeting was scheduled for July 21. Manager Danson asked Council members to review the memorandum and ordinance and provide comments that could be shared with the Commission.

The discussion also addressed the BEDC's accomplishments and purpose. Examples cited included new community events, follow-up interest from family-oriented businesses, participation in the Route 73/50-50 development network, communications with developers, business networking through the business-appreciation dinner, and visible projects such as banners. Manager Danson noted that events were the most visible accomplishments, while the more difficult ongoing work involved business recruitment, retention, developer communication, downtown and highway-commercial studies, facade improvement concepts and possible ordinance recommendations. She stated that the Commission's success should not be measured only by the number of new businesses opened during its first two years and that the Township first needed to define its expectations and provide an appropriate operational liaison.

6. INDEPENDENT FIRE COMPANY (IFC)

Manager Danson reported that the Independent Fire Company had submitted financial information to Council that evening in response to Council's prior request. She recommended that Council review the materials, develop questions and then schedule a meeting or further discussion. Questions were raised as to whether the information included a complete budget or was limited to expenditures and property-related information. Manager Danson stated that she had not yet reviewed the submission and would need time to determine whether it was sufficient.

Coun stated for the record that he had not prepared the requested Fire Department proposal because the supporting information had not been received until one or two days before the meeting, despite having been requested three to four weeks earlier. He stated that he would review the material during July and begin developing the proposal for a future public discussion.

NEW BUSINESS / SECOND EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council determined that a second Executive Session was necessary to discuss litigation and contract negotiations. It was stated on the record that Councilman Simonsick was required to recuse himself from the litigation discussion because the litigation included a matter in which he was a party.

A motion was made and seconded to enter Executive Session. All eligible members were in favor.

Council entered Executive Session at approximately 7:40 p.m. Council returned to open session at approximately 8:18 p.m. No formal action was taken during Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting until the Regular Township Council Meeting scheduled for August 6, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea T. McVeigh, RMC
Township Clerk