

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

Call to Order and Notice

Mayor Talarico called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30 PM

The meeting notice was stated to have been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by notifying the Township Clerk and posting notice on the Township website and official municipal bulletin board on December 23, 2025. The public was advised that comments would be received during designated public-comment periods and that speakers were to state their name and address and limit comments to five minutes unless otherwise directed by Council.

Roll Call

Present:

- Councilmember Kauffman
- Councilmember Nunes
- Councilmember Simonsick
- Councilmember Zahradnick
- Mayor Talarico

Ordinances -Introduction and First Reading

Ordinance No. 2026-18 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND REORGANIZING CHAPTER 16 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MAPLE SHADE TO PROVIDE FOR A PART-PAID MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT COMPRISED OF CAREER PERSONNEL AND A DESIGNATED VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

A motion to introduce the ordinance was made and seconded. The ordinance was approved for introduction by roll-call vote. The transcript reflects affirmative votes from Councilmember Kaufman, Councilmember Nunes, Councilmember Zahradnick, and Mayor Talarico. Councilmember Simonsick was not called to vote after municipal officials determined that he had a conflict of interest related to the ordinance.

Publication Date: September 25, 2026

Public Hearing Date: October 8, 2026

Councilmember Simonsick objected to being excluded from the vote and discussed the stated conflict determination. Discussion followed regarding the proposed fire-department structure, the role of Independent Fire Company No. 1, staffing, cost, and volunteer fire service.

(Mr. Simonsick) Excuse me, my name wasn't called for roll call.

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

(Attorney) That's correct. We determined who's with me. Okay. And the mayor. We looked at the issue and we determined that you had a conflict on this. Consistent with the litigation and the decision from Judge Fickery from last year and given your relationship with the fire chief, who's your son, who lives with you. (Mr. Simonsick) That's got nothing to do with this. Well, first of all, when you say we, you're our solicitor. The township manager and the mayor have no say in this, as far as I'm concerned. And second of all, this is an issue on spending money and reorganizing something that's got nothing to do with my son. Absolutely not. (Attorney) Well, it does affect the fire chief. (Mr. Simonsick) No, it doesn't. It has no effect on the fire chief. (Attorney) Well, I remember hearing you at the last meeting talking about the salary for the fire chief and you're hiring another fire chief and you're going to spend a lot of money.

(Mr. Simonsick) Yeah, (Attorney) which affects your son. (Mr. Simonsick) So what? I'm not voting on his. I didn't hire my son, they did. So if they want to fire my son, they can fire my son. Because I didn't vote. I abstained from that vote. So this is about township business. And this is for the record. I'm not starting to fight with you. I'm just putting it on record for everybody in this town to see that this council and the solicitor has violated the civil rights of everyone that voted for me as a Democrat in this township. I'm an elected official and I'm supposed to be involved in the budget, spending money, and where it goes. And it's just been taken out of my hands for no reason. If the judge feels that strongly, he can come down here and explain to the people of Maple Shade why this is a conflict of interest.

He's saying that I have poor judgment. I think his judgment is poor in this. That is not affecting anything here. This is an operational thing. You're creating a department. You're We're gonna keep amping it up revamping a department, and for the record for everyone, the only reason this is happening is because independent fire company number one is getting their number back, and they don't want them to have anything to do or say with the ability to fight fire and bring volunteers back, 'cause right now, you have no volunteers in this town that are fighting fires.

It's costing you money every time there's a fire, and it will continue. And if they don't want to discuss this now, that's fine.

Ordinance(s) – Second Reading and Public Hearing

Ordinance No. 2026-08 A Bond Ordinance for Various 2026 General Capital Improvements. The Ordinance Appropriates \$2,572,779, including Aggregate Grants of \$1,027,779, and Authorizes Issuance of \$1,471,135 in Bonds or Notes.

No member of the public commented. Council closed the public hearing and adopted the ordinance by roll-call vote:

*Kauffman – yes

*Nunes – yes

*Simonsick – no

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

*Zahradnick – yes
*Mayor Talarico – yes

Result: Adopted.

Ordinance No. 2026-09 A Bond Ordinance for Various 2026 Utility Capital Improvements. The Ordinance Appropriates \$2,092,000, including a Grant of \$1,092,000, and Authorizes Issuance of \$952,276 in Bonds or Notes.

No public comments were received. Council closed the public hearing and adopted the ordinance by roll-call vote:

*Kauffman – yes
*Nunes – yes
*Simonsick – no
*Zahradnick – yes
*Mayor Talarico - yes

Result: Adopted.

Ordinance No. 2026-10 A Bond Ordinance for Water-System Equipment. The ordinance Appropriates \$1,400,000 and Authorizes Issuance of \$1,400,000 in Bonds or Notes.

No public comments were received. Council closed the public hearing and adopted the ordinance by roll-call vote:

*Kauffman – yes
*Nunes – yes
*Simonsick – no
*Zahradnick – yes
*Mayor Talarico - yes

Result: Adopted.

Ordinance No. 2026-17 Amending Chapter 152, Property Maintenance, Article I, General Provisions, Section 152-14 of the Township Code.

No public comments were received. Council closed the public hearing and adopted the ordinance unanimously by roll-call vote.

Result: Adopted.

Consent Agenda and Bills

Public Comment on Consent Agenda

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

Residents commented and asked questions concerning the consent agenda, including **Resolution No. 2026-R-161**, which was described as a shared-services agreement involving the Township’s fire marshal and Moorestown Fire District No. 2. Municipal staff explained that the fire marshal has been performing services for Maple Shade and that the agreement would formalize the existing arrangement.

A resident identified apparent numerical inconsistencies in the proposed agreement and requested correction. Discussion also addressed the cost of the shared-service arrangement and whether hiring Township personnel could be more cost-effective.

Consent Resolutions

Council approved **Resolution Nos. 2026-R-159 through 2026-R-161**.

Resolution No. 2026-R-159 RESOLUTION TO DECLARE BLOCK 103, LOT 14 AS TAX EXEMPT AND TO CANCEL TAXES AS OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

Resolution No. 2026-R-160 RESOLUTION TO DECLARE BLOCK 53 Lot 1 AS TAX EXEMPT AND TO CANCEL TAXES FROM APRIL 27, 2026 AND REFUND OVERPAYMENT OF PROPERTY TAXES

Resolution No. 2026-R-161 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF MAPLE SHADE AND MOORESTOWN FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2

Councilmember Simonsick stated that he would vote “no” on Resolution No. 2026-R-161 and “yes” on the other resolutions.

Approval of Bills

The Township Manager reported the following bill-list amounts and recommended payment when funds are available:

Fund (\$1,569,643.67)	Amount
Current Fund	\$2,774,200.02
Utility Fund	\$420,585.57
Capital Fund	\$909,752.20

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

Fund (\$1,569,643.67)	Amount
Utility Capital Fund	\$679,355.50
Trust Fund	\$702,010.41
Grant Fund	\$888,818.00

The Trust Fund amount was reported to include tipping fees and collections for the month.

Council approved payment of the bills by roll-call vote.

Public Comment

Residents commented extensively on the proposed fire-department ordinance, fire-service staffing, the status and possible role of Independent Fire Company No. 1, municipal costs, fire-insurance ratings, and the impact of the proposal on taxpayers.

Key points raised included:

- A request that Council pursue a cooperative, cost-effective approach to fire protection and avoid personal disputes.
- Questions concerning the reintroduction of the fire ordinance as Ordinance No. 2026-18.
- Requests that Independent Fire Company No. 1 be expressly identified as the designated volunteer fire company in the ordinance.
- Questions regarding the ownership and leasing of the fire-company building.
- Concerns about the role of volunteer personnel, paid staffing, and potential tax effects.
- Discussion of the Township's current and future fire-service budget, staffing levels, fire prevention services, and reported Insurance Services Office rating issues.

Council and staff responded that the Township was seeking a solution to staffing and fire-protection needs.

Reports and Announcements

Community Events

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

Council and staff thanked volunteers involved with the Township sidewalk sale and car show. The events were reported as successful.

The following events and announcements were made:

- The ribbon-cutting for the new Buttonwood playground was announced.
- Council discussed naming the inclusive playground **“Every Kid’s Meadow”** and expressed agreement with the proposed name.
- The second annual Color Run was scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. on the following Saturday at the Municipal Building parking lot.
- The Sustainable Committee’s Halloween costume shop was expected to begin the following week.
- The final farmers market of the season, the Harvest Moon event, was scheduled for October 2 at Fox Meadow.
- The Business and Economic Development Commission announced that its annual business appreciation dinner was planned for Tuesday, November 17.

Township Operations Report

The Township Manager reported that, during August, the Construction Office:

- Issued 84 permits and 19 certificates.
- Completed 173 inspections.
- Collected approximately \$19,245 in permit fees.

Through August, the office had issued 717 permits, completed 1,439 inspections, and generated approximately \$234,930 in permit and miscellaneous fees. The report stated that this amount was approximately \$130,000 above anticipated revenue.

The Emergency Medical Services report reflected 2,248 year-to-date calls, including 642 medical emergencies, 231 fall victims, 152 respiratory emergencies, 139 cardiac emergencies, and 122 motor-vehicle accidents.

The Township Manager also reported that 2026 revenues through the reporting period totaled approximately \$2.86 million, compared with approximately \$2.56 million at the same point in 2025—an increase of approximately \$305,000, or 12 percent. Revenue growth was attributed in part to interest on investments, Uniform Construction Code fees, and miscellaneous revenue.

MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 – 6:30 PM

The Township Manager and Director of Community Development attended a developers event at Rowan University on September 16, 2026, and reported that meetings had been scheduled with developers to discuss potential projects along Main Street and the Route 73 corridor.

Engineering Report

The Township Engineer reported:

- Design work was ongoing for Windsor Avenue, with soil/core work planned for Phase One and Phase Two.
- Work was proceeding on the Oxford Avenue project.
- The Township had received information relating to anticipated grant-agreement approval for water-treatment improvements at Main Street and Kings Highway and potential work involving a new elevated tank.
- A redesign concept for Woodlawn recreation facilities was being prepared for review.
- The Buttonwood playground project was nearing completion.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Council moved and seconded to adjourn. The motion passed by voice vote.

Next Regular Meeting: October 8, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

Prepared by:
Township Clerk

Approved by Township Council: