MAPLE SHADE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
OCTOBER 8, 2026 – 6:30PM

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

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

The mayor stated that public notice had been provided pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act through notice to the Township Clerk and posting notice on the municipal website and official municipal bulletin board on December 23, 2025.

2. Roll Call

- Council member Kauffman
- Council member Nunes
- Council member Simonsick
- Council member Zahradnick
- Mayor Talarico

The Township Manager was identified during discussion as not being present.

3. Ordinances — Introduction and First Reading

Ordinance No. 2026-19 — Amendment and Restatement of Bond Ordinance No. 2025-11

Council considered an ordinance amending and restating Bond Ordinance No. 2025-11, appropriating $2,170,000 and authorizing issuance of general obligation bonds or bond anticipation notes in an aggregate principal amount not exceeding $2,066,500.

Discussion concerned identification of the projects covered by the ordinance, references to “various other projects,” and the reasons for amending the prior ordinance. It was explained that bond counsel had requested corrections to technical errors and that the ordinance packet included the project list.

Roll-call vote:
Kauffman – Motion Nunes – Second
Kauffman – Yes Nunes – Yes Simonsick – No Zahradnick – Yes Talarico – Yes

Result: Adopted on first reading, 4–1
Publication Date: October 9, 2026
Public Hearing Date: November 12, 2026

Ordinance No. 2026-20 — Amendment and Restatement of Bond Ordinance No. 2022-7

Council considered an ordinance amending and restating Bond Ordinance No. 2022-7, providing for various capital improvements and related expenses, appropriating $2,000,000, and authorizing issuance of $1,904,500 in water-sewer utility bonds or notes.

Council member Simonsick referred to concerns expressed during discussion of the preceding ordinance.

Roll-call vote:
Nunes – Motion Zahradnick – Second
Kauffman – Yes Nunes – Yes Simonsick – No Zahradnick – Yes Talarico – Yes

Result: Adopted on first reading, 4–1
Publication Date: October 9, 2026
Public Hearing Date: November 12, 2026

4. Ordinance — Second Reading and Public Hearing

Ordinance No. 2026-18 — Reorganization of Chapter 16, Fire Department

Council considered Ordinance No. 2026-18, amending and reorganizing Chapter 16 of the Township Code to provide for a part-paid municipal fire department comprised of career personnel and a designated volunteer fire company.

Correspondence and Council Discussion

A letter from Karen Pike, a former resident now living in Florida, was read into the record. The letter discussed her family's history with the fire department and encouraged cooperation between paid firefighters and volunteers to preserve dependable fire protection.

Mayor Talarico stated that the ordinance was not intended to eliminate volunteers and that qualified volunteers, including eligible Independent Fire Company No. 1 members, could serve subject to applicable requirements. The mayor described a preliminary staffing proposal to increase full-time firefighters from two to four, increase part-time staffing, and establish a full-time Fire Chief. The mayor also discussed estimated taxpayer costs increasing minimally.

Council member Simonsick expressed concern that removing specific reference to the Independent Fire Company from the existing ordinance could affect its reinstatement. He questioned the proposed costs and read correspondence from Deputy Chief Alec Fleming.

Deputy Chief Fleming's correspondence addressed staffing, proposed allocation of funding between command personnel and responding firefighters, volunteer stipend funding, training and recruitment, employee compensation and pension concerns, morale, and communication with Council and Township administration. He requested consideration of alternative staffing proposals and an opportunity for current department leadership to present its plans.

Council member Simonsick moved to table the ordinance. No second was recorded, and no vote on the motion was taken.

Public Hearing

The public hearing was opened at approximately 7:00 p.m. Speakers addressed the following matters:

Speaker	**Summary of comments**
Pam Chamberlain	Discussed IFC leadership responsibilities, accountability, compliance, and the need to examine the circumstances leading to the organization's current status.
Nick Diniglio	Asked about Council's efforts to restore the IFC; discussed state correspondence, municipal recognition, standard operating procedures, and volunteer staffing. Expressed concern that the ordinance could affect reinstatement and questioned the expense of a full-time Fire Chief.
Vince Heisler	Urged Council to table the ordinance, meet with fire service representatives, and seek a cooperative solution. Expressed willingness to volunteer.
Joe McDermott	Emphasized public safety and requested a community vote on the issue.
Bobbilynn Loomis	Discussed qualified volunteer participation, oversight, leadership accountability, communication, community fire-prevention activities, and IFC fundraising and expenses. Requested a clear staffing plan, budget, and measurable accountability standards.

Speaker	Summary of comments
Joe Walters	Requested that Council table the ordinance and meet with the IFC, department leadership, and Township administration. Suggested submitting the issue to a public vote.
Nikki Pappas	Stated that fire-prevention programming and associated funding fall under the Fire Marshal's office rather than the IFC.
Phil Wien	Discussed volunteer service, departmental history, camaraderie, and the need for cooperation among Council, the municipal fire department, and the IFC.
John Brasco	Questioned the phrase "stipend career staffing" and the ordinance's use of "unified command" in connection with the Fire Chief's authority. Requested legal review of those provisions.
Joanne Mortimer	Discussed volunteer dedication, training records, administrative support, IFC recognition, and the need for joint procedures and communication. Requested explicit recognition of the IFC in the ordinance.

Council and members of the public discussed differing interpretations of state correspondence concerning IFC reinstatement. Council member Simonsick disputed several statements concerning IFC operations and discussed staffing and the use of paid and volunteer personnel.

Motion to close the public hearing: Nunes
Second: Kauffman
Comments: None
All in Favor: Yes

Adoption

Council discussed adoption with clarification of the paragraphs identified during public comment. The solicitor stated that significant revisions between introduction and adoption

would require restarting the ordinance process, but that the issues raised appeared potentially to involve terminology or clarification rather than substantial revision. The provisions were to be referred to special counsel.

A motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2026-18 "with approval with clarification of the paragraphs" was made.

Roll-call vote:
Motion: Zahradnick Second: Kauffman
Kauffman: Yes Nunes: Yes Zahradnick: Yes Talarico: Yes

The solicitor stated that Council member Simonsick was disqualified from voting on the ordinance. His attempted vote was not counted.

Result: Adopted "with approval with clarification of the paragraphs", 4-0

5. Consent Agenda

The public was invited to comment on the consent agenda. No comments were offered.

Motion to close: Nunes
Second: Kauffman
All in Favor: Yes

Council considered Resolution Nos. 2026-R-162 through 2026-R-166.

Resolution No. 2026-R-162 RESOLUTION APPROVING APPLICATION FOR PERSON-TO-PERSON LIQUOR LICENSE TRANSFER (0319-33-012-007) FROM SENSATIONAL HOST, INC TO NIGHT OOF, LLC

Resolution No. 2026-R-163 RESOLUTION TO REFUND FOR BLOCK 75 LOT 2 OVERPAYMENT OF PROPERTY TAXES

Resolution No. 2026-R-164 AMEND CONTRACT WITH BOOTH MECHANICAL, INC FOR NORTH TERRACE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS AND APPROVE FINAL CHANGE ORDER

Resolution No. 2026-R-165 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENTS OF DEPUTY REGISTRAR AND ALTERNATE REGISTRARS

Resolution No. 2026-R-166 A RESOLUTION TO AMEND A DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN AND ADD A PLAN PROVISION

Roll-call vote:
Kauffman – Motion Nunes – Second
Kauffman – Yes Nunes – Yes Simonsick – Yes Zahradnick – Yes Talarico – Yes

Result: Consent resolutions approved, 5-0.

6. Approval of Expenditure List

The mayor presented the following expenditure totals:

Fund	Amount
Current Fund	$5,352,815.68
Utility Fund	$193,772.70
General Capital Fund	$223,481.77
Utility Capital Fund	$257,115.59
Trust Fund	$11,407.12
Grant Fund	$5,875.62

Roll-call:
Kauffman – Motion Nunes – Second
Kauffman – Yes Nunes – Yes Simonsick – Yes Zahradnick – Yes Talarico – Yes

Result: Expenditure list approved, 5-0.

7. Approval of September 2026 Minutes

Council approved the minutes of the September 2026 meetings.

Roll-call:
Nunes – Motion Zahradnick – Second
Kauffman –Abstain Nunes – Yes Simonsick – Yes Zahradnick – Yes Talarico – Yes

Result: Approved, 4-0.

8. General Public Comment

The general public comment portion was opened.

- Nick Diniglio encouraged Council members to improve cooperation, communication, and meeting decorum.
- Joanne Mortimer questioned the municipal building's Friday closing time of 1:30 p.m. and described residents arriving afterward to conduct Township business. She

suggested maintaining staff coverage. Council explained that the hours remained part of a trial and indicated that the concern would be passed along.

- Joe McDermott reiterated his request for a community vote on fire service matters and emphasized public safety.

Motion to close the public portion: Nunes
Second: Kauffman
All in Favor: Yes

9. Staff, Professional, and Council Comments

Katie Wellington was welcomed as the new Deputy Clerk. She expressed appreciation for the welcome and noted her lifelong residency in Maple Shade.

Condolences were expressed to the family of Steve Quintus.

A reminder was given to exercise caution around children during Halloween activities.

The following community events were announced:

- VFW Auxiliary veterans' breakfast on the upcoming Sunday
- Veterans' Coffee, October 12, 9:00–11:00 a.m., at the municipal building.
- Maple Shade Youth Cheerleading Boo Bash, October 17, 7:00–11:00 p.m.
- Breast Cancer Walk, October 18, at the high school.
- Halloween Parade, October 24, at 2:15 p.m.
- Fox Meadow Trunk or Treat, October 28, at 5:00 p.m.
- Soccer Fall Festival, October 30, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
- Free flu shots the following day, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

10. Reports and Old Business

Police Department Report

The Police Chief reported on:

- A September 27 investigation at Village of Stoney Run involving an injured victim, a fleeing suspect, subsequent identification and arrest, and charges including aggravated assault, obstruction, and resisting arrest.

- A September 29 incident on Gardenia Drive involving a dispute, a knife, damage to a vehicle tire, and an arrest on criminal mischief and weapons charges.
- "Painting Pumpkins with Police," scheduled for October 16, 6:00–8:00 p.m., at the municipal building for children ages 4–12. Farms were thanked for pumpkin donations.
- Operational preparations for the October 24 Halloween Parade.
- Dave Priebs' appointment as Corporal.
- Joseph Donofrio's completion of field training and assignment to Sergeant Turner's shift.
- Unanimous approval of the department's reaccreditation by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police Accreditation Board, with accreditation extending through 2029.

The Chief described the accreditation review as covering 107 law-enforcement best-practice standards.

Monthly statistics included 10 assaults, 41 domestic incidents, 75 motor vehicle crashes, nine missing-person reports, 384 property checks, 11 restraining-order violations, 71 suspicious-activity calls, 431 motor vehicle stops, two DUI arrests, 10 vehicle thefts, and 69 well-being checks.

Council member Nunes commented favorably on improvements in delivery-truck parking practices on Stiles Avenue.

Sustainable Maple Shade

The next Halloween shop was announced for the upcoming Saturday, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., at the municipal building. The next community cleanup was scheduled for October 18.

BEDC

The Color Run was announced for October 17, 2026, rescheduled following a rainout. No additional old business was raised.

11. New Business

The mayor invited new business not listed on the agenda. None was raised.

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Nunes
Second: Kauffman
All in Favor: Yes

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

The next regular Township Council meeting was announced for **November 12, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Township Clerk