Milford Township Board of Supervisors' Minutes
July 16, 2026 - 4:00 p.m.

Supervisors Present: Christian Haberle, Chair; John Mininger, Vice Chair and Timothy Johnson, Member.

Staff Present: Jeff Vey, Township Manager and Devan Ambron, Assistant Manager/Secretary/Treasurer.

Call to Order: Mr. Haberle called the July 16, 2026 Board of Supervisors meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Land Development Fee Discussion: LifeQuest Congregate Care and Independent Living, John Fries Highway. Mr. Shane McGuire, representing LifeQuest, addressed the Board regarding Milford Township's land development application fees and escrow requirements. He explained that LifeQuest anticipates submitting land development plans for Lots 2, 4, and 5 in the near future and has compared Milford Township's fee schedule and escrow requirements with those of surrounding municipalities. He stated that Milford Township's per-unit application fees are significantly higher than those of neighboring townships and boroughs. Mr. Del Markward stated that he raised this issue with the Board of Supervisors approximately four years ago with the understanding that the fee schedule would be revisited; however, no revisions were made. He also noted that the Township charges an additional fee for final plan submissions, which is uncommon among neighboring municipalities. Mr. Markward stated that, for a proposed 500-unit development, the total fees could range from approximately $300,000 to $500,000. While the escrow requirement had previously been reduced, he requested that the Board consider making additional adjustments to establish a more reasonable fee structure. He stated that this was the primary purpose of the discussion. Mr. Mininger asked whether all surrounding municipalities had been included in the fee comparison. Mr. Markward responded that a comparison chart had been provided to Mr. Vey. Mr. McGuire added that a direct comparison had been completed between Milford Township and Upper Saucon Township. Mr. Vey stated that the primary factor contributing to the high fees is the Township's per-unit fee structure. He explained that some municipalities charge a higher fee for the initial number of units, with the fee decreasing as the number of units increases. Mr. Haberle commented that Milford Township's escrow requirements include review costs from the Township authorities at the start of the project. Ultimately, the developer is responsible only for the actual review costs incurred, and any unused escrow funds are refunded. He also noted that the Township does not frequently receive applications for developments of approximately 500 units. Mr. Vey explained that unused escrow funds are returned to the applicant; however, engineering review costs increase when plan submissions require additional review. He presented a detailed escrow accounting for the apartment project and stated that the escrow account had not been replenished in accordance with the Township's requirements. Mr. Markward stated that he had recently received the escrow account documentation. Mr. Vey explained that the Township's policy requires applicants to replenish the escrow account to its original amount once the balance falls below 50 percent. He asked how the Township should proceed with enforcing that requirement moving forward. Mr. Markward stated that in April he had raised concerns regarding what he believed to be excessive engineering review charges and, at that time, an additional $25,000 had been deposited into the escrow account. Mr. Haberle acknowledged that the review costs can be significant but suggested that applicants can help minimize expenses by submitting plans that are complete and accurate the first time, thereby reducing the number of review comments. Mr. Markward responded that the engineering review letter for the Retail Plan was approximately 14 pages long and, in his opinion, much of the content was not relevant to final plan approval and could have been substantially shorter. Mr. Vey stated that Township Engineer Mr. Baldwin had performed certain work without billing. Mr. Markward reiterated that maintaining properly funded escrow accounts is important and noted that all outstanding escrow balances are currently up to date. Mr. Vey reiterated that the initial escrow requirement is excessively high. He stated that Mrs. Mallery will monitor escrow balances and notify applicants when an account falls below 50 percent of the required amount. At that point, a notice will be sent advising the applicant and Township professionals that plan review will cease until the escrow account has been replenished. Mr. Markward noted that the Board of Supervisors ultimately controls the administration of the review process. Mr. Haberle asked what development was proposed for Lots 2, 4, and 5. Mr. McGuire stated that Lots 2 and 5 are proposed for a 500-unit senior living development, while Lot 4 is proposed for a 50,000-square-foot retail/office building. Mr. McGuire asked whether the Township would consider amending the ordinance to revise the fee schedule. Mr. Markward stated that LifeQuest expects to submit the plans in August. He suggested revising the per-unit fee structure and again questioned why the Township charges a separate fee for final plan submissions, noting that many neighboring municipalities do not assess such a fee.

Mr. Vey explained that final plan reviews often involve revisions to the preliminary plan and verification that all preliminary approval conditions have been satisfied. He stated that engineering reviews at the final plan stage address overall site improvements and compliance, rather than solely conceptual issues. Mr. Haberle commented that escrow requirements can be structured in a variety of ways. Mr. Vey agreed that the Township's initial escrow requirement appears to be high but stated that any revisions would likely require more than a one-time adjustment. He indicated that a resolution amending the fee schedule could be prepared for the Board's consideration, potentially at the September Board of Supervisors meeting. There was no further discussion.

Public Comment: No public was is attendance.

Mr. Haberle made a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mininger and passed unanimously.