

**VERNON TOWNSHIP LAND USE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 28, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Whitaker at 7:09 p.m.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE:

Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this Regular Meeting has been provided to the public and the press on January 29, 2025, by delivering to the press such notice and posting same at the Municipal Building.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Vice Chairman Whitaker led the assemblage of the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Mayor's Designee John Auberger	P
Natalie Buccieri	P
Councilmember William Higgins	P
Martin Theobald	NP
Richard Spoerl	P
Willard McPeck	P
Andrea Cocula	P
Paul Mele	P
Michael Whitaker	P
Jodi White-Bearstler Alt #1	P
Mark Vizzini Alt #2	P
Marissa-Groenendaal-Poteete Alt #3	P
Richard Wengenroth Alt #4	P

Also Present:

Cory Stoner, Board Engineer

Kimberley Decker, Board Secretary

Mr. Theobald notified the Board of his absence.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Vice Chairman Whitaker stated that the applicant O'Neill Group 517 Route 515, LLC has requested to adjourn their application's public hearing until March or April with no further notice required.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Vice Chairman Whitaker opened the meeting to the Public

Kirk Stevens stated Vernon Township's intent for the Town Center was a walkable commercial area with residential as secondary use and questioned the Planner's review and Land Use Board's vision for Town Center area. Mr. Stoner explained the Township Council and Land Use Board has approved the Town Center Redevelopment Plan allowing mixed uses in the zone. The Land Use Board must review all applications per the Master Plan and all Zoning ordinances and noted the Planner was not in error. Mr. Stevens opined after many conversations with residents and developers, found that the approved 1995 plan with recent updates may not be appropriate for the vision of the town zone.

Lisa Ouellette, resident of Wantage and AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassador attended local Environmental Commission and Land Use meetings and questioned Board about Master Plan. Mr. Stoner explained the Master Plan adopted in 1995 and since updated in 2022 specifies planning uses for growth in the Township and is available on the Township website. Elements in the Master Plan include

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Recreation, Open Space, Historic, Environmental, Housing, Circulation, Land Use Development among additional areas. He added the Master Plan is made up of approved Ordinances or laws which are enforced by the Township Officials when development is proposed. Local Zoning or Code Enforcement Officer can issue violations or summons when construction not in accordance with ordinances. Proposed development can be permitted or those not permitted which require variance(s) and will be brought before the Land Use Board for approval.

Seeing no one further wishing to come forward, Vice Chairman Whitaker closed the meeting to the Public.

LAND USE BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS (ACTION MAY OR MAY NOT BE TAKEN)

- **ORDINANCE #26-02 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERNON, COUNTY OF SUSSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, RELEASING, EXTINGUISHING AND VACATING THE RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC IN A PORTION OF BLOCK 436, LOT22, BURGHER ROAD.**

Mr. Stoner explained Ordinance #26-02 has been introduced by the Township Council and has been referred to the Land Use Board to determine if Ordinance is consistent with the Master Plan. Burgher Road is a dead-end road located in Lake Wanda and resident requesting vacation owns property on both sides of proposed 77 ft right of way portion. Per Land Use law, the vacated portion if approved will revert the ownership and responsibility to both adjacent properties. Mr. Stoner stated the Township has decided that there is no public need for said portion of roadway and has since paved remaining portion of Burgher Road.

Board discussed and recommended that Ordinance #26-02 is consistent with the Master Plan and there are no concerns or issues for the health, safety or welfare of the public good. The Ordinance does not interfere with the Township's planning efforts nor landlocking any land lots.

Ms. Cocula made a motion to forward Recommendation to the Township Council and was seconded by Mr. Spoerl. All Members were in favor. Motion Passed.

RESOLUTIONS

LU# 10-25-10 – MOUNTAIN CREEK RESORT, INC. - BLOCK 532, LOT 11, - MAJOR SOIL FILL APPLICATION FOR 3,000 YARDS OF SOIL

ELIGIBLE TO VOTE: ROSSI, LARSEN, HIGGINS, SPOERL, MCPEEK, COCULA, WHITAKER, HALEY, THEOBALD

Motion: A motion to approve Resolution LU#10-25-10 was made by Mr. Spoerl and was seconded by Mr. McPeek.

ROLL CALL: HIGGINS: Y; SPOERL: Y; MCPEEK: Y; COCULA: Y; WHITAKER: Y. Motion Passed.

MINUTES

- **NOVEMBER 12, 2025 – REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (ROSSI, LARSEN, HIGGINS, SPOERL, MCPEEK, COCULA, WHITAKER, HALEY, THEOBALD)**

Motion: A motion to approve Minutes of November 12, 2025 was made by Mr. McPeek and was seconded by Ms. Cocula.

ROLL CALL: HIGGINS: Y; SPOERL: Y; MCPEEK: Y; COCULA: Y; WHITAKER: Y. Motion Passed.

APPENDIX A – ESCROWS, BOARD FEES, BOND REDUCTIONS AND ESCROW CLOSURE

ESCROWS, BOARD FEES AND BOND REDUCTIONS

A. BOARD FEES

1. BOARD ATTORNEY – GLENN KIENZ, WEINER LAW GROUP LLP
 - LAND USE BOARD BUSINESS – SERVICES THROUGH 11/12/25 (\$666.00)
 - LAND USE BOARD BUSINESS – SERVICES THROUGH 12/23/25 (\$144.00)
 - VEOLIA WATER NJ – LU# 9-25-8– SERVICES THROUGH 9/23/25 (\$67.50)
 - O’NEIL GROUP THETA 12 – LU# 9-25-9 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/12/25 (\$540.00)
 - O’NEIL GROUP THETA 12 – LU# 9-25-9 – SERVICES THROUGH 12/5/25 (\$72.00)
 - MOUNTAIN CREEK INC. – LU# 10-25-10 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/18/25 (\$454.50)
 - O’NEIL GROUP 517 – LU# 6-25-4 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/12/25 (\$238.50)
 - O’NEIL GROUP 517 – LU# 6-25-4 – SERVICES THROUGH 12/29/25 (\$234.00)
 - RED HAND LLC – LU# 2-25-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/21/25 (\$432.00)
 - RED HAND LLC – LU# 2-25-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 12/19/25 (\$234.00)
 - THOMAS REEVES – LU# 7-25-5 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/11/25 (\$216.00)
2. BOARD PLANNER – JESSICA CALDWELL, J. CALDWELL & ASSOCIATES
 - LAND USE BOARD BUSINESS – SERVICES THROUGH 11/12/25 (\$525.00)
 - LAND USE BOARD BUSINESS – SERVICES THROUGH 13/30/25
 - AQUA NEW JERSEY – LU# 7-25-6 – SERVICES THROUGH 8/7/25 (\$300.00)
 - RED HAND LLC – LU# 2-25-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 9/17/25 (\$300.00)
 - VEOLIA WATER NJ – LU# 9-25-8– SERVICES THROUGH 9/22/25 (\$2,123.00)
 - O’NEIL GROUP 517 – LU# 6-25-4 – SERVICES THROUGH 9/8/25 (\$1,087.50)
 - WALEID SHOUSA – LU# 5-25-3 – SERVICES THROUGH 9/29/25 (\$942.50)
3. BOARD ENGINEER – CORY STONER, HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES
 - LAND USE BOARD BUSINESS – SERVICES THROUGH 11/12/25 (\$580.00)
 - BRIGHT HORIZON – LU# 1-22-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 10/30/25 (\$607.20)
 - BRIGHT HORIZON – LU# 1-22-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/26/25 (\$1,351.15)
 - RED HAND LLC – LU# 2-25-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 10/20/25 (\$472.90)
 - RED HAND LLC – LU# 2-25-1 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/7/25 (\$276.00)
 - O’NEIL GROUP 517 – LU# 6-25-4 – SERVICES THROUGH 10/16/25 (\$1,644.00)
 - O’NEIL GROUP 517 – LU# 6-25-4 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/10/25 (\$1,501.20)
 - GROUP THETA 12 – LU# 9-25-9 – SERVICES THROUGH 10/8/25 (\$348.00)
 - WALEID SHOUSA – LU# 5-25-3 – SERVICES THROUGH 10/8/25 (\$72.50)
 - VEOLIA WATER NJ – LU# 9-25-8– SERVICES THROUGH 10/8/25 (\$976.25)
 - MOUNTAIN CREEK INC. – LU# 10-25-10 – SERVICES THROUGH 10/14/25 (\$432.50)
 - WAHEGURU GAS – LU# 3-22-2 – SERVICES THROUGH 11/25/25 (\$60.00)
4. BOARD RECORDING SECRETARY – IRENE MILLS (\$150.00)

Motion: Motion to Approve Fees to be paid was made by Ms. White-Bearstler and was seconded by Mr. Higgins. All Members voted in Favor. Motion Passed

ADJOURNMENT

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Having no more board business, a motion was made to adjourn the Regular meeting by Mr. Auberger and was seconded by Mr. Vizzini. All members were in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Irene Mills, Recording Secretary