

Council Meeting Minutes
Upper Darby Township
100 Garrett Road
Upper Darby, PA 19082
September 17, 2025 7:00 pm

****The video of this meeting can be viewed in its entirety on youtube.com/upperdarby.org****

Vice President Minick opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

Present: Michelle Billups (MB), Marion Minick (MM), David Bantoe (DB), Jess Branas (JB), Brian Andruszko (BA), Laura Wentz (LW) via Zoom, Matt Silva (MS) via Zoom, Danyelle Blackwell (Dblackwell), and Myron McNeely (Mmcneely).

Excused: Hafiz Tunis (HT), Meaghan Wagner (MW).

Also present: The Honorable Mayor Ed Brown, Chief Administrative Officer Crandall O. Jones, Solicitors Michael Clarke and Sydney Youngblood, Chief Municipal Clerk Kate Doggett, and Upper Darby Township police officers.

LW called a Point of Order.

Motion by LW, seconded by BA

Motion to amend the agenda order by placing Ordinance No. 3191 immediately after the Public Forum.

All in favor

Motion passes

Rules for Meeting Decorum

“Upper Darby residents have the opportunity to speak for three (3) minutes. Residents are prohibited from making threats, using profanity, or acting in a manner that would impede or prevent the conduct of the business of the meeting. Any person who attends the meeting and makes remarks, disrupts, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting after receiving a verbal warning may be required to leave the meeting at the discretion of the Council President.” Public Forum should not exceed thirty (30) minutes. If a resident chooses to ask questions, they are voluntarily giving up their time for a response. This means that the 3-minute timer will continue to run no matter who is speaking. The timer will be clearly displayed on the screen.

LW called a Point of Order. She stated that the Home Rule Charter does not require a speaker during Public Forum to provide their address.

Public Forum

Terry Bradley discussed the issue of hazardous trees in the township, her meeting with Mayor Brown on this matter, and her right-to-know requests.

Sheldon Rich of 7117 Pennsylvania Avenue said he wished to speak about Ordinance No. 3191, but would wait until the Public Hearing.

Elaine Weaver spent the first minute of her time silently honoring Charlie Kirk's memory. She stated that the Rules of Decorum should state "concerned persons," not residents. She discussed the personal impact of the EIT and paying for parking during Council meetings.

John DeMasi discussed responses to his Right-to-Know requests, addressed comments made by administration members, and negotiations between the administration and the police and firefighters.

Olivia Taylor discussed soccer games at Cardington Field involving non-residents, the impact of Aqua projects on street conditions, and a project near 69th Street.

David Kimball of Maryland Avenue expressed concern about the proposed EIT's impact on residents.

John Vizzarri of 353 Kirks Lane discussed Ordinance No. 3070, adopted in April 2020, regarding sewer lateral inspections.

Bonnie Hallam of 4719 Woodland Avenue stated she is in favor of the proposed EIT. She discussed the land development set for the Mozino tracts and the importance of saving green space. She announced that Tree Tenders of Upper Darby is providing free trees.

William Scott of 324 Blanchard Road discussed the township's financial condition and current challenges.

Connie Komm of Spruce opined on who is to blame for the township's financial challenges and commented on political groups.

Dolores Lombardi of 29 S. Kirklyn Avenue spoke about the Mozino tract and the importance of saving green space.

Faith Zerbe of 379 Upland Way appreciated the nursery at Naylor's Run and emphasized the importance of preserving green space to prevent environmental issues.

Lee Jordan of 90 Pilgrim Lane strongly opposed land development at the Mozino tract, specifically the proposed car wash.

Terri McGrath of 5018 Sylvia Road addressed the recently installed "No Parking Anytime" sign on her street. She stated that it causes hardship and attributed it to a disgruntled neighbor. She requested that it be removed.

Motion by LW, seconded by BA

Motion to extend Public Forum to allow everyone who signed in to speak.

Roll Call Vote: 5 in favor (MB, BA, LW, MS, Dblackwell) 4 opposed (MM, DB, JB, Mmcneely), 2 excused (MW, HT)

Motion passes

Steve Komm of Spruce Street opined on national political issues and their impact on the township's well-being and residents.

Spero asked about ongoing work at Bond Park, noting the absence of fencing around active digging areas. He opposes the proposed EIT.

Jeannie Moberly of 240 Copley Road discussed the effects of new technology, spam emails, and phone calls.

Bob Yantorno acknowledged the passing of resident Catherine Malloy. He discussed the FOP contract negotiations and expressed appreciation for police officers.

Judy Duggan thanked police officers and firefighters for all they do. She inquired about the parking payment policy during Council meetings.

Ray King of 526 Winfield Avenue opposes the proposed land development at the Mozino tract and favors saving open space.

Jacob Lanning of 4702 Woodland Avenue stated he is a township high school student interested in the community's future and expressed support for the EIT.

Alexander Melford of 137 St. Charles Street stated he is a township high school student interested in the community's future and expressed support for the EIT.

Becky Duggan spoke on behalf of another resident, informing Council of a rat problem on the 800 block of Fairfax. She talked about mutual respect.

Sheikh Siddique of Hilltop Road announced a community appreciation event and BBQ at Cardington recreation area on 9/21/2025 between 1:00 and 7:00. The Masjid Al-Madinah Islamic Center will host the event.

Luke Stivata, Executive Director of the Breaking Bread Community, spoke about the resources provided by Breaking Bread and provided his contact information:

luke@breakingbreadcommunity.org, 609-947-6678.

Richard A. Blye prayed and cited scripture and spoke about the attempt on his life.

Joanne Nammavong addressed remarks made during public forum, referenced the murder of Charlie Kirk, and cited scripture.

Justine Mays stated she is against having to pay for parking while attending Council meetings and aired grievances against council and administration members.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Dblackwell, seconded by DB

Motion for Council to Approve the September 3, 2025, Committee Meeting Minutes

All in favor

Motion passes.

Motion by Mmcneely, seconded by DB

Motion to Allow Mayor Brown to speak before the Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 3191

Roll Call Vote: 8 in favor (MB, MM, DB, JB, BA, MS, Dblackwell, Mmcneely) 1 opposed (LW), 2 excused (MW, HT)

Motion passes

The Honorable Mayor Ed Brown

Mayor Brown discussed the necessity of implementing an Earned Income Tax (EIT) and the community improvements it would support.

Motion by Dblackwell, seconded by JB

Motion to Open a Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 3191

All in favor

Motion passes

Public Hearing

CAO Jones introduced Ordinance No. 3191, Imposition of an Earned Income Tax. He stated that the need for an earned income tax was identified based on recommendations from a comprehensive financial analysis by expert economists. He highlighted that without new recurring revenue, the township's financial position will deteriorate and threaten essential services and long-term stability.

Solicitor Michael Clarke marked Exhibits as follows: Township 1-Ordinance No. 3191; Township 2-Affidavit of Publication under the Local Tax Enabling Act (advertisement and public notice published in the Delaware County Daily Times, Daily & Sunday Times Digital on 8/27/25, 9/3/25, and 9/10/25); Township 3-Affidavit of Publication under the Upper Darby Township Charter (advertisement and public notice published in the Delaware County Daily Times, Daily & Sunday Times Digital on 9/9/25); Township 4-Public Notice of the Public Hearing under the Local Tax Enabling Act; and, Township 5-Public Notice of the Public Hearing under the Upper Darby Township Charter. He stated that this Ordinance would amend Chapter 489 to add Article 8 entitled Earned Income Tax. If approved tonight, it would be effective 30 days after the Mayor signs it. Notwithstanding the effective date, the Ordinance makes clear that the tax itself, if approved, will not be collected or implemented until January 1, 2026, and it is enacted pursuant to the authority of the Local Tax Enabling Act. The tax would be implemented for general purposes on earned income and net profits of residents and non-residents working in Upper Darby Township.

Justine Mays read Ordinance No. 3191 in its entirety.

Connie Komm shared her opinions on why the earned income tax must be implemented.

John Vizzarri spoke about the impact of the earned income tax on the residents.

Olivia Taylor spoke about the increase in taxation and aired grievances against the Council and administration.

Mark Litrenta stated he does not favor the earned income tax and would like the leadership to find other solutions. He asked questions about the township fund balance, credit rating, and the process for raising an earned income tax rate.

Sheldon Rich discussed the purpose of taxes in a community and favors an earned income tax.

Councilor Wentz clarified that there is no time limit for speaking during a public hearing.

Councilor Bantoe left the meeting and re-joined via Zoom.

Steven Komm stated he supports Mayor Brown and the Council and favors imposing an earned income tax. He opined on national political issues.

Connie Kennedy outlined the reasons why she is in favor of an earned income tax.

John DeMasi inquired whether any factors could influence the Council to vote against the proposed earned income tax. He spoke about town halls, employee salaries, healthcare costs, and local tax statistics, including specific dollar amounts and percentage increases related to tax hikes. Mayor Brown responded to several of these points. He urged the Council to control costs and implement the tax at a lower rate.

Judy Duggan requested clarification from Mayor Brown on the difference between retirement income and earned income.

Joanne Nammavong raised concerns regarding the Ordinance's language and definitions. She questioned Keystone's method of tax collection and urged the administration to communicate with residents. She asked Mayor Brown to consider reducing the tax rate.

Faith Zerbe stated that she supports a one percent earned income tax and appreciates the Council.

Steven Komm supports the one percent earned income tax.

Justine Mays inquired about the destination of the earned income tax revenue and where it will be allocated, and requested a reduction in the tax rate. She questioned why the tax was not placed on a ballot or submitted as a referendum, to which Solicitor Clarke answered. She mentioned having a newsletter to inform residents about township projects and costs. Councilor Billups responded to the questions. She stated that the Council usually does not respond to her questions.

Becky Duggan expressed a concern regarding the meeting rules to a Council member.

Rick Sahar said he disagreed with the timing of implementing an earned income tax.

Judy Duggan addressed a council member about the earned income tax's impact on residents and requested a reduction in the tax rate.

Motion by JB, seconded by BA

Motion to Close the Public Hearing on Ordinance No. 3191

All in favor

Motion passes

Motion by Mmcneely, seconded by JB

Motion to Approve Ordinance No. 3191

LW thanked all those who spoke during the Public Hearing and thanked Justine Mays for reading the ordinance. She does not support a one percent earned income tax due to the impact on residents and expressed appreciation for John DeMasi's breakdown of the effects during his comments. She said she has not spoken to any resident who supports this. She expressed concern about the increased budget, reduced services, and the high millage rate.

DB commented that he supports the implementation of this earned income tax because it will benefit the township by bringing revenue back to Upper Darby from other municipalities.

JB discussed her reasons for supporting the earned income tax, stating her main reason is the correlation between public safety, property values, and the need for local taxation.

MS commented on the significant disparity in the tax impact on residents.

Mmcneely stated that maintaining a nice community depends on funding essential services through tax revenue.

Dblackwell acknowledged the difficulty of the decision but emphasized that this tax is necessary.

MM stated that he is committed to building Upper Darby's future. The earned income tax will allow the township to meet its current financial obligations and take on larger projects, and additional sources of revenue are necessary.

LW clarified that professional firefighters are present 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in four of the five fire departments.

Motion by LW, seconded by MS

Motion to Amend Ordinance No. 3191 to implement an earned income tax at a rate of 0.25% instead of 1%.

Mmcneely does not accept the Amendment.

Motion to Approve Ordinance No. 3191

Roll Call Vote: 6 in favor (MB, MM, DB, JB, Dblackwell, Mmcneely), 3 opposed (BA, LW, MS), 2 excused (MW, HT)

Motion to Approve Ordinance No. 3191 passes.

Motion by Dblackwell, seconded by BA

Motion to consider Resolution Nos. 32-25, 33-25, 34-25, 35-25, and 36-25 together under a consent agenda unless a member requests an item be removed for separate discussion.

8 in favor, 1 opposed (MS)

Motion passes

Vice-President Minick asked if any member would like to remove an item from the consent agenda for separate discussion.

No one requests that an item be removed.

Motion by Dblackwell, seconded by BA

Motion to Approve the following resolutions under the Consent Agenda: Resolution Nos. 32-25, 33-25, 34-25, 35-25, and 36-25.

Roll Call Vote: 9 in favor (MB, MM, DB, JB, BA, LW, MS, Dblackwell, Mmcneely), 2 excused (MW, HT)

Motion passes

Motion by BA, seconded by MB

Motion to Adjourn

All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 12:26 am

Respectfully submitted,



Catherine Doggett
Chief Municipal Clerk