

Lower Salford Township
Communications Committee Minutes
August 19, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Chair Kevin Shelly. Committee members present were Kevin Shelly, John Del Pizzo, Harry Solimeo, Terri Ehrhart, Rob Carlson, and Stacy Silva. Grace Kelley and Christina Bernhardt were present as liaisons to the Township. Chair Shelly led the pledge of allegiance.

Minutes

Chair Shelly called for review of the June 17, 2026 minutes. Members noted minor corrections to the draft minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Ehrhart and seconded by Mr. Del Pizzo to approve the minutes as corrected. All in favor.

Public Comment

Mr. Del Pizzo complimented Township staff on the increased amount and quality of communications in recent months. He noted while information is increasingly available that challenge remains to connect residents to the communication channels.

Lori Yamashita of 470 Wexford Circle thanked the committee for its continued consideration of issues she had previously raised and agreed that increasing resident awareness and engagement remains important.

Recurring Items

- Township Presence: Ms. Kelley said attendance appeared somewhat lighter than at some prior markets but was still described as a successful event.
- Newsletter and Email updates: Ms. Bernhardt reported that newsletters, email updates, and specialized notices continue to be distributed as needed.
- Development/Open Space Awareness: Ms. Kelley reported the Eye on Development webpage and GIS interactive map had recently been updated following the Planning Commission meeting and applications were also being accepted for the new Open Space and Trails Committee, with significant resident interest.
- General Resident Feedback: Staff reported positive response to increased social-media and video content. Members agreed the redesigned website has made frequently requested information easier for residents to locate. Mr. Carlson relayed feedback concerning communications during the Township's road maintenance and resealing work. Members discussed ensuring that schedule changes and completion notices flow from Public Works through the Township's communication channels. Staff described a new bird-identification activity using QR codes that allows park visitors to record birds they observe, to possibly use in future Township communications.

Unfinished Business

A) Township Communication Channels and Resident Outreach

Members continued discussion of how to increase resident use of the Township's existing communication channels. Mr. Del Pizzo said the original intent of the item was to identify a small number of channels on which the committee could concentrate and determine specific ways to increase resident participation. Members agreed that the resident survey results would help identify which methods merit additional attention, and to bring specific communication-channel initiatives back as new business in the future.

B) Primer for Speakers/Participants at Public Meetings

The committee:

- Reviewed material developed for a possible quick-reference guide to help residents understand public comment and participation at Township meetings.
- Discussed two potential objectives: providing informal guidance to residents under existing practices and possible procedures for future consideration by the Board.
- Emphasized the objective should be to make residents more comfortable participating and not additional restrictions or impose uniform procedures on individual boards and committees.
- Discussed basic information when public comment occurs, what a resident can expect after speaking, the possibility that a board may not respond or take immediate action, differences involving formal hearings, and how to make effective comments.
- Discussed how prepared presentations, slides, printed materials, sign-in procedures, and speaking-time limits might be handled.
- Members generally favored retaining flexibility, particularly where attendance is light, while recognizing that time limits or additional procedures may become necessary at heavily attended meetings, and using this committee as a pilot for any proposed guidelines before suggesting their wider use.
- Agreed guidance should be online so residents can review it before attending their first meeting.
- Agreed to make completion of the resident public-comment primer a primary focus of the September meeting.

New Business

C) Resident Survey Results

Township staff presented results of the resident communications survey, which received nearly 200 responses. Results generally indicated that residents continue to receive Township information through email/Constant Contact, the printed newsletter, and the Township website. Members noted increased use and awareness of social media compared with prior surveys. Interest in text alerts was also significant and was discussed as a possible area for additional focus. Approximately 85 respondents provided open-ended comments, notably positive. Members also discussed publishing a summary of the survey results in a future newsletter or on the Township website.

D) Posting Proposed Ordinances to the Web Site

Mr. Carlson proposed that the Township create a dedicated webpage for proposed ordinances. He cited his experience following the recently adopted data-center ordinance and noted that proposed ordinance text may not become readily visible to residents until it appears in a Board of Supervisors meeting packet. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson and seconded by Mr. Solimeo to recommend that the Township consider creating a proposed-ordinances webpage for concurrent posting of ordinances that have been publicly advertised or are otherwise under consideration. All in favor.

E) Communications Committee Priorities for Remainder of 2026

Members identified completion of the primer and resident public-comment guidance as the committee's principal near-term priority. Members agreed that the committee now has a sufficiently actionable set of items to guide its work during the next several months.

F) Report to the Board of Supervisors

Ms. Kelley said she would report the committee's formal recommendation concerning creation of a proposed-ordinances webpage to the Board of Supervisors. She would also advise the Board that the committee is developing guidelines and practical information intended to help residents prepare to speak at Township meetings. Members suggested asking the Supervisors whether they have encountered particular problems or "pain points" involving public comment that the committee should consider while developing the guide, and providing the Board with a summary of the resident survey results.

Public Comment

Ms. Yamashita reported that she had recently requested and participated in a meeting with Township personnel concerning issues she had raised. She characterized the discussion as direct, productive, and positive and said the meeting concluded on good terms.

Members noted that the experience was consistent with the welcoming relationship between Township staff and residents that the Communications Committee hopes to encourage.

Closing

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m on motion from Mr. Carlson and second from Mr. Del Pizzo. All in favor.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2026 at 7:30 p.m. at the Township Building and via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Rob Carlson

Communications Committee Secretary