

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
9/11 25th Remembrance Committee
MINUTES – MARCH 31, 2026

A meeting of the 9/11 25th Remembrance Committee was held in the Municipal Building on March 31, 2026 at 5:30pm. Mr. Kratzer called the meeting to order.

Those present:

Committee Members: John Hughes
 Daniel Powell
 Judi Reiss
 Ellen Sarcini
 Chaiti Banerjee
 Beth McNamara
 Eric Stark
 Frances Thompson (participated remotely)

Board of Supervisors: Colin Coyle

Others: David W. Kratzer, Jr., Township Manager
 Lynn Todd, Parks and Recreation Operations Manager
 Lieutenant Larry Hilghman, Lower Makefield Police Department
 Chief Glenn Chamberlain, Yardley-Makefield Fire Company
 Deputy Fire Marshall Jeff Goldberg, Yardley-Makefield Fire Company

ATTENDEE INTRODUCTIONS

Each member of the Committee and those in attendance introduced themselves.

COMMITTEE PURPOSE

Supervisor Coyle reviewed the purpose of the Committee from the perspective of the Board of Supervisors. He noted that that the Township was looking to schedule an evening event on September 10, 2026 and morning event on September 11, 2026. John Hughes questioned the rationale for having an evening event on September 10th as opposed to September 11th. Supervisor Coyle noted that the Township was not scheduling an evening event after sunset on September 11, 2026 due to the start of Rosh Hashanah. Discussion ensued on the topic with members expressing concerns relative to potential confusion caused by an evening ceremony on September 10th versus September 11th, perceived past precedent, the denial of the special events permit application submitted on behalf of 9-11 Memorial Garden of Reflection, Inc. (a private non-profit), and the consideration of allowing 9-11 Memorial Garden of Reflection, Inc. to conduct an evening event after sundown on September 11, 2026. Supervisor Coyle noted that the denial of the special events permit application is a matter separate and distinct from the work of the Committee and the Committee could make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors

to schedule an evening event concluding at sundown on September 11, 2026 in lieu of the contemplated September 10th evening event.

DISCUSSION REGARDING FOUNDATIONAL THEMES

Kratzer reviewed some suggested foundational themes and tone for the event(s) noting remembrance, unity, education, community, and reflection. Additional emphasis was raised by the Committee that the event should highlight intergenerational relevance to help younger residents understand and appreciate why 9/11 still matters.

REVIEW OF PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Kratzer reviewed a framework program/structure for the event including the presentation of colors, national anthem, moments of silence, tolling of the bells, reading of names, guest speakers, and interfaith invocation/benediction. The Committee suggested additional emphasis on honoring firefighters, first responders, and the potential of recognizing the names of Pennsylvanians who later died in the Global War on Terror to frame the event not only to the day itself, but also to its long-term impact on military service, public safety, and national life. The Committee was encouraged to share any additional ideas that they may have. The general consensus was to have the program structure solidified by June 2026.

MUSIC AND CEREMONIAL PARTICIPATION

Possible participants discussed included the Pennsbury Band, Stars of Tomorrow, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and possible participation and support through Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. The Committee was encouraged to share any additional ideas that they may have.

LOGISTICAL PLANNING

The Committee reviewed an audio video and production proposal from Mid-Atlantic Event Group. Kratzer requested that the Committee review scope elements. He also noted that comparative pricing would be requested from additional vendors.

POLICE AND FIRE COMPANY SUPPORT

Lieutenant Hilghman and Chief Chamberlain outlined the capabilities of their respective departments and expressed general support for the event and the work of the Committee.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

Kratzer noted that the Township's Public Information Officer is available to support the event through website updates, social media channels, press releases, and local media coordination.

ELECTED OFFICIAL/DIGNITARY OUTREACH/INVITATIONS

The Committee discussed outreach to the following elected officials/dignitaries to extend invitations to attend the event(s):

- Governor Josh Shapiro;
- Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis;
- U.S. Senators David McCormick and John Fetterman;

- U.S. Representative Brian Fitzpatrick;
- Bucks County State Legislative Delegation;
- Former Governor Tom Ridge;
- Former Lieutenant Governor Mark Schweiker; and
- Former U.S. Representative Jim Greenwood.

It was noted that invitations should go out soon once the dates and times of the event(s) are finalized.

EVENT BUDGET, SPONSORSHIP, AND FUNDRAISING

The Committee inquired what the amount of Township funds available for the event(s) is. Kratzer noted that \$25,000 is available in the Township's adopted 2026 Budget for a community event. Additional discussion occurred relative to sponsorship requests and fundraising. Township staff will draft a form letter for outreach for the Committee's review and comment. There was also some discussion about the potential use of the Lower Makefield Township Community Foundation as conduit for individual and corporate monetary contributions and potential funds that may be available through America250 funding programs.

NEXT MEETING AND COMMITTEE COMMUNICATION

The Committee discussed having another meeting prior to the next Board of Supervisors Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 15th. Township staff will be in communication with potential dates and times to meet prior to April 15th and provide email addresses for Committee members, Township staff, and external emergency service providers; however, it was noted that all information should be channeled through Kratzer and that Committee deliberation and decision making would need to occur at public meetings of the Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one wishing to make public comment at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

David W. Kratzer, Jr., Township Manager