

**TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG**  
**SHADE TREE COMMISSION**  
**REORGANIZATION/REGULAR MEETING**

**7:00 pm**

January 8, 2026

The January 8<sup>th</sup> meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Robyn George. A moment of silence was offered followed by the Oath of Allegiance.

Chairwoman George stated “Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided indicating the time and place of the meeting in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975 by advertising a Notice in The Star Ledger, The Express-Times LehighValleyLive.com and Township Website – [www.lopatcongtp.com](http://www.lopatcongtp.com) and by posting a copy on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building.”

Roll Call:

Present – Chairwoman Robyn George, Vice-Chair Gregory Blackwood, and Member Ben George

Organization of the Commission:

1. Resolution No. 26-01 – Approving Annual Meeting Calendar for Year 2026

R 26-01

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND  
STATE OF NEW JERSEY DESIGNATING OFFICIAL MEETING CALENDAR FOR  
THE SHADE TREE COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR 2026**

WHEREAS, Section 113 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 1975, requires that at least once a year, not later than January 10<sup>th</sup>, of such year, every public body shall post and mail to the newspapers designated by said body, a schedule of the location, time and date of each meeting of said body during the succeeding year.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular meetings of the Lopatcong Township Shade Tree Commission will be held the second Thursday of each month for the year 2026, at 7:00 pm at the Municipal Building, located at 232 S. Third Street, Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

If the first Thursday shall fall on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held on the following day. The dates are as follows:

January 8, 2026 Reorganization Meeting

February 5, 2026  
March 5, 2026  
April 2, 2026  
May 7, 2026  
June 4, 2026  
July 9, 2026

August 6, 2026  
September 3, 2026  
October 1, 2026  
November 5, 2026  
December 3, 2026

January 7, 2027 Reorganization Meeting

CERTIFICATION

I, Terri L. Bisci, Secretary of the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Commission at the Reorganization Meeting held on Thursday, January 8, 2026.

Terri L. Bisci  
Secretary

Motion to approve by: Member George

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Blackwood

AYES: Chairwoman George, Vice-Chair Gregory Blackwood, and Member Ben George

NAYS: None

2. Resolution No. 26-02 – Designation of Newspapers to Received Meeting Notices

R 26-02

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF  
NEW JERSEY, DESIGNATING NEWSPAPERS TO RECEIVE NOTICES OF MEETINGS

WHEREAS, Section 3 (d) of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, requires that certain notices of meetings shall be submitted to two (2) newspapers, one of which shall be designated as the official newspaper of the Township of Lopatcong; and

WHEREAS, the second newspaper designated by this body must be one that has the greatest likelihood of informing the public within the jurisdictional boundaries of this body of such meetings.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey.

1. The Express-Times at Lehigh Valley Live. Com is hereby designated as the official newspaper of the Township to receive all notices of meetings as required under the Open Public Meetings Act.
2. The Star Ledger has the greatest likelihood of informing the public within the jurisdictional area of this body of such meetings.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

#### CERTIFICATION

I, Terri L. Bisci, Secretary of the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Commission at the Reorganization Meeting held on Thursday, January 8, 2026.

Terri L. Bisci  
Secretary

Motion to approve by: Vice-Chair Blackwood

Seconded by: Member George

AYES: Chairwoman Robyn George, Vice-Chair Gregory Blackwood, and Member Ben George

NAYS: None

3. Resolution No. 26-03 – Designation of Official Website and Newspaper for Legal Notices Effective March 1, 2026

R 26-03

#### RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY DESIGNATING THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE AND AN ELIGIBLE ONLINE NEWS PUBLICATION FOR THE PUBLICATION OF ALL STATUTORILY REQUIRED LEGAL NOTICES

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey has enacted P.L. 2025, c.72, which modernizes the requirements for the publication of legal notices, replacing the traditional print newspaper mandate with a requirement for online publication on official public entity websites and in some cases, eligible online news publications; and

WHEREAS, effective March 1, 2026, all public entities are required to publish legal notices on their official Internet websites, with certain transitional requirements for advertising in online news publications during the 2026 calendar year; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40:53-1 and related statutes authorize the governing body to designate the official channels for such publications; and

WHEREAS, the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren wishes to designate its official website and an eligible online news publication to ensure compliance with P.L. 2025, c. 72 and the Open Public Meetings Act OPMA).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong County of Warren, State of New Jersey, that:

1. Official Website Designation: The official Internet website for the publication of all legal notices and advertisements required by law is hereby designated as <https://www.lopatcongtwp.com>.

The website shall be accessible to the public free of charge.

A direct hyperlink to the legal notices section shall be conspicuously placed on the homepage.

All legal notices shall be displayed on the website for a minimum of one week, or the

Time otherwise required by law, and archived for at least one year.

2. Official Online News Publication Designation (for 2026 transitional period and optional use thereafter): The following eligible online news publication, which meets the criteria set forth in P.L. 2025, c. 72 (specifically P.L. 2025, c. 72, s.2.b. and R.S. 35:1-2.2 criteria for eligibility), are hereby designated for any required or supplemental publications:

THE STAR LEDGER, with its website <https://www.legalads@support.njadvance-media.com>

LOPATCONG TOWNSHIP, with its website <https://www.lopatcongtwp.com>

Transitional Requirements: For the calendar year 2026, the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren, shall publish an advertisement at least twice per month in the designated online news publication, which advertisement shall state that the full text of all legal notices may be viewed on the official municipal website and shall include a hyperlink to the Secretary of State's forthcoming centralized legal notices webpage.

Implementation: The Secretary of the Shade Tree Commission is hereby authorized and directed to take all necessary actions to ensure compliance with the requirements of P.L. 2025, c. 72, including coordinating with the Secretary of State's office regarding the centralized webpage links and establishing archive procedures.

Effective Date: This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

#### CERTIFICATION

I, Terri L. Bisci Secretary, of the Shade Tree Commission, County of Warren, State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Commission at the Reorganization Meeting held on Thursday, January 8, 2026.

Terri L. Bisci  
Secretary

Motion to approve by: Member George

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Blackwood

AYES: Chairwoman Robyn George, Vice-Chair Gregory Blackwood, and Member Ben George

NAYS: None

4. Resolution No. 26-04 – Adopt Robert’s Rule of Order as a Basic Guide for Fair and Orderly Procedure in Meetings

R 26-04

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY ADOPTING ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER AS A BASIC GUIDE FOR FAIR AND ORDERLY PROCEDURE IN MEETINGS

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey, that Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised 11<sup>th</sup> edition is hereby adopted as parliamentary authority for procedure in meetings.

CERTIFICATION

I, Terri L. Bisci, Shade Tree Commission of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Commission at the Reorganization Meeting held on Thursday, January 8, 2026.

Terri L. Bisci  
Secretary

Motion to approve by: Member George

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Blackwood

AYES: Chairwoman Robyn George, Vice-Chair Gregory Blackwood, and Member Ben George

NAYS: None

Old Business:

1. Approval of November 6, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve by: Vice-Chair Blackwood

Seconded by: Member George

AYES: Chairwoman Robyn George, Vice-Chair Gregory Blackwood, Member Ben George

NAYS: None

Roll Call

### Powderhorn Tree Project:

Chairwoman George discussed the need to encumber the money from the 2025 year, so the Shade Tree Commission would be able to use the money in the spring to plant the trees for the project. She also mentioned how they were not able to plant the trees due to power lines running in the beds where they were supposed to plant the trees. So, it put a stop to the project.

Secretary Bisci advised the Commission that she spoke to Clerk Dilts to see how the Commission should proceed for the planting for 2026. It was discussed moving forward that if the residents are unable to plant the tree in the bed, they would be given a voucher for a tree to be planted on their property. The resident would need to sign a hold harmless agreement with the town and then take the voucher to Garden State to work with them to plant the tree on their property. Secretary Bisci advised that they are waiting to hear back from the attorney to make sure this is the correct way to proceed. Secretary Bisci also asked, "moving forward did they want to plant the trees in the spring or in the fall?" Chairwoman George responded, "typically they would plant in the fall, however they did not want to be doing two tree plantings in the fall." The Commission also discussed what they could do with the extra trees that aren't going to get planted. They mentioned possibly planting them over off of Belview Road or even going up into the big development where they had previously planted Ash trees in the right of way in front of the storm water basin. The Commission is concerned with take a tree, plant a tree. Chairwoman George mentioned sending everyone a map to see where they have removed trees and also making a list to go with the map.

Chairwoman George discussed coming in front of council to ask them if they would be able to plant a tree near the pickle ball courts. Even planting trees around the park once it's complete.

### Arbor Day:

Chairwoman George discussed how the school is planting their own trees with the help of the Green Team; therefore, they do not need to plant a tree at the school for Arbor Day. She also mentioned how Rutgers University donated a rain garden to the school. Chairwoman George spoke about how she went to the school to help the Green Team clean out the rain garden and they would like to get it up and running in the spring. So, Chairwoman George will reach out to Lisa Beenders who is in charge of the Green Team and see what ideas she has for fund raising. Chairwoman George will then reach out to the Rec. Committee to see if they would like to help raise funds for the Green Team. Chairwoman George discussed reaching out to Jim Palitto and ask about the pickleball courts as that would be a great place to plant a tree for Arbor Day.

### Earth Day Clean Up:

Chairwoman George asked if they want to do an Earth Day clean up this year since last year, they ended up cancelling it. The Shade Tree would like to go back to the way they used to do it in the past by getting a flyer out and then put it on the website and social media for them to get volunteers to help out with it. The Commission thinks it would be a good idea to get it out in March for April clean up. Chairwoman George will reach out to Jim Palitto for planting a tree and clean up so they can work together with the Rec. Committee.

Public Comment: None

Motion to adjourn the meeting by: Member George Seconded by: Vice-Chair Blackwood

AYES: All in favor

NAYS: None

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Bisci  
Secretary