

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT John J. Merhottein, President
John K. Gallagher, Vice President
Matthew C. Deckman, Commissioner
Michael D. Hudak, Commissioner
DeAnn L. Lawrence, Commissioner

OTHERS PRESENT James L. Broughal, Township Solicitor
Chad DeFelice, Township Solicitor
Doug Bruce, Township Manager
Samantha Smith, Community Development Director
Ronald J. Gawlik, Township Engineer

CALL TO ORDER Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

OATH OF OFFICE Chief Gottschall thanked everyone for coming out to support the newly appointed police supervisors. Mr. Merhottein administered the oath of office to Sergeant Kanaskie and Corporal Kraemer.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

**ANDREA SHAH
1565 VALLEY ROAD
BETHLEHEM** Ms. Shah said she and her husband are building a home at 3580 Manor Road. She said they were informed by township officials that, because of the size of the proposed home, the property will require a stormwater management plan and agreement. She asked if this requirement could be waived. Solicitor Broughal said the board does not have authority to waive those requirements. Mr. Deckman asked if the agreement could be amended. Solicitor Broughal said the agreement is part of an ordinance and cannot be amended. Ms. Shah said the agreement allows the township to go on their property without notice for a stormwater problem and she is concerned about that. Solicitor Broughal said the only reason the township would go on their property is if their stormwater run-off negatively affects the neighboring properties and would be notified to fix it right away before the township can come on their property.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted 4-0-1 by voice vote to approve the August 18, 2025 regular public meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Merhottein abstained.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE 2-25 **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM'S CODE OF CODIFIED ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 240 TAXATION; ARTICLE V EARNED INCOME TAX; SECTION 240-49.1 INCENTIVES FOR TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEERS OF FIRE COMPANIES TO AMEND THE REAL PROPERTY TAX CREDIT PROVISIONS TO ITS ORDINANCE AND REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HERewith**

Mr. Merhottein said this ordinance waives the tax liability for the volunteer fire fighters who are residents and have been certified under the program.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to adopt Ordinance 02-25 amending the Township of Bethlehem's Code of Codified Ordinances, Chapter 240 Taxation; Article V Earned Income Tax; Section 240-49.1 Incentives for township volunteers of fire companies to amend the real property tax credit provisions to its ordinance and repeal all ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith.

SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT

RESOLUTION R053-25 A RESOLUTION GRANTING APPROVAL OF THE FIELDS AT FARMERSVILLE PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN

Mr. Merhottein said the developer had requested a waiver relating to SALDO 230-57.K(4)(e) and (g), related to stormwater.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to deny the requested waiver.

Ms. Smith said the applicant is proposing to develop a 50.37-acre tract as a residential subdivision – which is permitted by-right in the Medium Density Residential Zone – at 3107 Farmersville Road. A total of 108 housing units are proposed with the following breakdown: 42 single family detached units, 8 single family attached twins, and 58 attached townhouses. The plans also propose a dog park and an additional 26-space parking area. The Planning Commission recommended approval at their meeting in July. Mr. Gallagher said he received feedback from the fire department. They were concerned about getting fire apparatus through the narrow streets especially in the cul-de-sac. Ms. Smith said the Fire Marshal reviewed the plans and said no-parking signs should be placed on one side of the street. Mr. Gallagher said the police don't have the time to patrol cars parked there. Mr. Hudak asked if the ordinance requires no-parking signs. Ms. Smith said no.

Attorney Kevin Kalaher said he reviewed the resolution and believes the comments from the planning commission and the zoning officer regarding the state of the culvert were premature. They are working with the municipal authority to determine participation in construction and contribution.

Upon motion (Hudak-Merhottein), the Board of Commissioners voted 4-1 by voice vote granting approval of the Fields at Farmersville Preliminary Subdivision Plan. Mr. Gallagher opposed.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R054-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION WITH PALMER TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA; PALMER TOWNSHIP STORMWATER AUTHORITY, AND BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY, WITH RESPECT TO A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT AND PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING CERTAIN STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM AND TOWNSHIP OF

**PALMER AND TO CREATE, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN STORMWATER
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES WITHIN THE PROJECTS**

Mr. Merhottein said this agreement is intended to establish a framework similar to the Intermunicipal Agreement we previously formed with the City of Bethlehem. The agreement essentially provides the basis for identifying joint tasks within an accepted methodology.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R054-25 authorizing the Intermunicipal Cooperation with Palmer Township, Northampton County, Pennsylvania; Palmer Township Stormwater Authority, and Bethlehem Township Municipal Authority, with respect to a collaborative effort and process of implementing certain stormwater management projects within the Township of Bethlehem and Township of Palmer and to create, operate and maintain stormwater best management practices within the projects.

**RESOLUTION R055-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CORPORAL KEVIN LINDSAY AND
OFFICER NICK SPINGOLA TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL PENNSYLVANIA
STATE POLICE CRASH RECONSTRUCTION TRAINING CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 2, 2025 AT THE KALAHARI CONVENTION
CENTER, POCONO MANOR, PENNSYLVANIA**

Mr. Merhottein said this was a budgeted standard police training resolution.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R055-25 authorizing Corporal Kevin Lindsay and Officer Nick Spingola to attend the annual Pennsylvania State Police Crash Reconstruction Training Conference September 30 - October 2, 2025 at the Kalahari Convention center, Pocono Manor, Pennsylvania.

**RESOLUTION R056-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO
UTILIZE MUNICIBID ON-LINE GOVERNMENT AUCTION SERVICE FOR
THE SALE OF TOWNSHIP-OWNED PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Mr. Deckman asked if the light bars were included in this resolution. Mr. Merhottein said they are sold separately.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R056-25 authorizing the township manager to utilize Municibid on-line government auction service for the sale of township-owned personal property.

**RESOLUTION R057-25 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION TO THE
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
“TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE PROGRAM”**

Mr. Merhottein said the township engineer identified a PennDOT program the Santee Road project qualifies for and is recommending an application to that program. Mr. Gawlik believes it is a nice fit. The project proposes \$700,000 in pedestrian improvements and widening of Santee Road coming down from Freedom High School.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R057-25 authorizing an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation “Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program”.

**MOTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

MOTION

**A MOTION APPROVING A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER AGREEMENT
BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP AND BETHLEHEM AREA
VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL**

Mr. Merhottein said this is an annual agreement where the school district agrees to pay 50% of the officer's salary and benefits for 180 days. Mr. Deckman asked how long the agreement has been in place. Mr. Bruce said he didn't know, but it was many years.

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving a school resource officer agreement between Bethlehem Township and Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School.

MOTION

**A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO ENTER
INTO A PUBLIC POLE ATTACHMENT LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH
PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES CORPORATION**

Mr. Bruce said the following: township emergency responders identified an issue with emergency vehicle preemption on Route 191 at the intersection for the Bethlehem Square shopping center, just south of US Route 22. They are finding that the preemption changeover is too slow because there is a hill that blocks the view of the equipment. The township engineer has recommended adding an advance preemption detector. This requires limited equipment: a small controller box, preemption receiver, radio antenna, and confirmation light. There are PPL poles with light standards at good locations for this equipment. PPL requires this agreement to start the process of adding the equipment to its poles.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing the township manager to enter into a public pole attachment license agreement with PPL Electric Utilities Corporation.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20251768 – SKYBLADE FAN CO. – PPIS – \$9,440.00
PO 20251769 – BARRETT CUSTOM CARPENTRY, LLC – PPIS – \$5,850.00
PO 20251770 – CDL ON SITE LLC – PUBLIC WORKS – \$3,500.00
PO 20251771 – FASCELLA CONST. CORP. – PUBLIC WORKS – \$22,056.25
PO 20251815 – CORE & MAIN – PPIS – \$9,300.00
PO 20251821 – NAZARETH FORD INC – POLICE – \$2,178.96

Mr. Gallagher commented that the purchase order for a CDL license seemed very expensive.

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve purchase orders as presented.

EXECUTIVE SESSION Solicitor Broughal said the Board of Commissioners met in executive session after the
ANNOUNCEMENT regular public meeting on September 2, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss contract
negations pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:47
p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary