

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
APRIL 6, 2026**

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
Doug Bruce, Township Manager
Samantha Smith, Community Development Director
Ron Gawlik, Township Engineer

CALL TO ORDER Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

**DAVE BUCHERER
4220 NICHOLAS ST.** Mr. Bucherer thanked the board for getting the noise ordinance in the newsletter. He said it's a quality of life issue and believes educating the residents is key.

**JIM DALEY
1942 GRIGIO PL.** Mr. Daley said as a professional engineer retired, he has 52 years' experience with power plants for critical loads and is in favor of data centers. He said it's a great way to generate a revenue base with minimal traffic impact.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the March 16, 2026 regular public meeting minutes as amended.

PUBLIC HEARING

ORDINANCE 04-26 **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 8-97, CHAPTER 275 "ZONING" OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED, BY AMENDING VARIOUS SECTIONS OF ARTICLE II, "TERMINOLOGY", ARTICLE VIII "NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT", ARTICLE XXVI, "NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT AND ARTICLE XX ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC USES**

Mr. Gallagher asked if this was the same motion that was tabled at the previous meeting. Solicitor Broughal said this was a different ordinance which specifically relates to convenience stores with fueling stations. Julie Wagner-Burkhardt, attorney for an affected property owner, said that even with this zoning amendment, plans for a Wawa in Harvey's Corner on Freemansburg Avenue would still need to go through the land development process and possibly to the zoning hearing board for zoning relief.

**JIM DALEY
1942 GRIGIO PL.** Mr. Daley said the Planning Commission supported this amendment at its February 23, 2026 meeting.

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to adopt Ordinance 04-26 amending Ordinance No. 8-97, Chapter 275 “Zoning” of the Township of Bethlehem Code of Ordinances, as Amended, by Amending Various Sections of Article II, “Terminology”, Article VIII “Neighborhood Commercial District”, Article XXVI, “Neighborhood Enhancement Overlay District and Article XX Additional Requirements for Specific Uses.

**SUBDIVISIONS &
LAND
DEVELOPMENT**

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO MOVE THE PROPOSED GENERAL TEXT AMENDMENT FOR ADOPTION, AND AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT OF A PUBLIC HEARING RELATED HERETO. (TABLED)

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to untable this motion.

Ms. Smith said the proposed general text amendment includes data centers. The Environmental Advisory Council provided feedback, most of which was included.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to authorize the township manager to move the proposed general text amendment for adoption, and authorize advertisement of a public hearing related hereto.

MOTION

A MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO ADVERTISE A PUBLIC HEARING FOR AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 131 FIRE PREVENTION ORDINANCE IN ORDER TO RECTIFY THE DEFINITION OF ‘FIRE CODE OFFICIAL’ WITH TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr. Merhottein said this is due to the departure of fire marshal and the reconfiguration of the position in the community development department.

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing the township manager to advertise a public hearing for amendment to Chapter 131 Fire Prevention Ordinance in order to rectify the definition of ‘fire code official’ with township personnel and responsibilities.

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A HOLD HARMLESS INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP, LUIS R. SOTO CARRILLO, AND BEATRIZ E. CARRILLO NORIEGA REGARDING INSTALLATION OF A FENCE IN A TOWNSHIP EASEMENT AT 1703 CHARLEY LANE

Mr. Merhottein said this is a standard request for fence installation within an easement at 1703 Charley Lane.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman) the Board of Commissioners voted

unanimously authorizing and approving a hold harmless indemnification agreement between Bethlehem Township, Luis R. Soto Carrillo, and Beatriz E. Carrillo Noriega regarding installation of a fence in a township easement at 1703 Charley Lane.

MOTION

A MOTION TO EXTEND THE DEVELOPER’S OBLIGATION TO COMPLY WITH APPROVAL CONDITIONS, PURSUANT TO THE CONDITIONAL PLAN APPROVAL, FOR 4406 EASTON AVENUE APARTMENTS TO DECEMBER 31, 2026

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote extending the developer’s obligation to comply with approval conditions, pursuant to the conditional plan approval, for 4406 Easton Avenue Apartments to December 31, 2026.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R033-26 A RESOLUTION AWARDDING THE CONTRACT FOR THE COLD IN-PLACE RECYCLING AND OVERLAY PROJECT

Mr. Merhottein said this is the township’s annual road paving contract which was budgeted for. Mr. Gallagher asked if there were any costs savings in paving both areas. Mr. Bruce said there were no substantial savings since they are not close by to one another.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R033-26 awarding the contract for the cold in-place recycling and overlay project to Recon Construction Services, Inc. in the amount of \$1,033,828.00.

RESOLUTION R034-26 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXPENDITURE OF \$441,420.43 FOR A 2026 FORD E450 CCTV INSPECTION VEHICLE WITH REPUBLIC FIRST NATIONAL CORPORATION AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CERTAIN GOVERNMENT OBLIGATION CONTRACT

Mr. Merhottein said this is a five-year lease-purchase of a new closed-circuit TV inspection truck for PPIS.

Upon motion (Deckman-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R034-26 approving the expenditure of \$441,420.43 for a 2026 Ford E450 CCTV Inspection Vehicle with Republic First National Corporation and authorizing the execution of a certain government obligation contract.

RESOLUTION R035-26 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE EXPENDITURE OF \$289,107.00 FOR A 2026 MACK DUMP TRUCK WITH UNIVEST CAPITAL INC. D/B/A/ MUNICIPAL CAPITAL FINANCE AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CERTAIN GOVERNMENT OBLIGATION CONTRACT

Mr. Merhottein said this is a five-year lease purchase of a new large dump truck for Public Works.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R035-26 approving the expenditure of \$289,107.00 for a 2026 Mack dump truck with Univest capital Inc. d/b/a/ Municipal Capital Finance and authorizing the execution of a certain government obligation contract.

RESOLUTION R036-26 A RESOLUTION APPOINTING A SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER AND ALTERNATE SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Mr. Merhottein said the certifications of the township's current sewage enforcement officer expired in December. Rich Kanaskie would also like to step down from his appointment as alternate sewage enforcement officer.

**DAVE BUCHERER
4220 NICHOLAS ST.**

Mr. Bucherer asked if this was new position. Mr. Bruce said this is an appointed position for professional services. They are only called out if there is a malfunction with an on-lot septic system.

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R036-26 appointing Hanover Engineering as Sewage Enforcement Officer and The Pidcock Company as Alternate Sewage Enforcement Officer.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20260645 – H.T. LYONS CONTRACTORS – PPIS – \$19,361.00
PO 20260654 – BROWN-DAUB CHRYSLER/JEEP/ DODGE – PPIS – \$3,526.76
PO 20260672 – DEEP RUN AQUATIC SERVICES – BTCC – \$28,064.00
PO 20260673 – NORTH EAST PARTS GROUP, LLC – PW – \$2,320.38
PO 20260674 – LEHIGH VALLEY FENCE CO. – PW – \$2,745.00
PO 20260675 – CHEMUNG SUPPLY CORP. – PW – \$2,115.00
PO 20260676 – TRIAD TRUCK EQUIPMENT INC. – PW – \$4,729.00
PO 20260678 – EAST COAST FLOOR DIST. – PPIS – \$5,927.70
PO 20260718 – TK ELEVATOR CORP. – BTCC – \$4,323.92
PO 20260179 – TRI-BORO FENCING CONTRACTORS – PPIS – \$11,420.00
PO 20260721 – PCPA – POLICE – \$4,000.00
PO 20260722 – PATRIOT WORKWEAR – POLICE – \$5,308.00

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

DISCUSSION ITEM

**HEALTHCARE
VILLAGE TEXT
AMENDMENT**

Ms. Smith said: Staff and the solicitor have been working with St Luke's representatives and their team to update sign regulations applicable to the Healthcare Village Overlay District. As currently adopted, the Anderson Campus follows sign regulations called 'Design Guidelines', which are adopted separately from the Zoning Ordinance. The regulations are difficult, cumbersome and perpetually outdated for both parties (staff and St Luke's). This proposed amendment will move streamlined, simplified and functional sign regulations for the hospital campus into the Zoning Ordinance. Staff intends to schedule this for informal review by the Planning Commission in April as well.

By consensus the board authorized staff to move forward with the Healthcare Village text amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting
at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary