

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
OCTOBER 6, 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
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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT Solicitor Broughal said the Board of Commissioners met in executive session on October 6, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss litigation matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

**JUNE DING
2761 KINGSVIEW AVE.** Ms. Ding submitted a petition with 73 signatures to the board for road repairs in the Kingsview neighborhood. She said nothing has been done to the roads since they were installed 40 years ago; the macadam is crumbling and the trees are overgrown and breaking the sidewalk. Ms. Ding asked for the paving schedule. Mr. Bruce said Kingsview was not on the current five -year schedule. He said the administration would like to pave more roads every year but it is a difficult budgeting issue. Ms. Ding said there was also a sink hole and asked who would be responsible for the medical bills if she were to get hurt. Mr. Hudak said her health insurance would have to pay. Mr. Bruce said the township's insurance carrier would be notified of any such situation. Solicitor Broughal said the board could not make that call. Ms. Ding invited the board to see the condition of the roads in her neighborhood. Mr. Hudak and Mr. Merhottein agreed to drive through the area.

**RICHARD KNAUSS
4040 DANBERRY DR.** Mr. Knauss his property was one of the first homes built in the Kingsview neighborhood. He said the macadam is crumbling. He also noted junk cars on a nearby property with oil draining out and asked if there were any regulations. Ms. Smith gave Mr. Knauss a form to file a complaint for her department to investigate.

**ROBERT GAUTHIER
4215 FARMERSVILLE RD.** Mr. Gauthier said he spent \$10,000 to remediate the water run-off onto his property and believes he should not pay the stormwater fee. Mr. Bruce said every property in the township is assessed a stormwater fee; there is, however, a process to ask for a waiver or credit. Mr. Gauthier said he applied twice and got no response. Mr. Hudak the state mandates that local municipalities correct the stormwater problem and the fee goes towards the repairs throughout the whole township. Mr. Gauthier asked if the stormwater fee was a tax or a fee. Solicitor Broughal said it is a fee, but the question has been before the state supreme court for over two years.

BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN TERR.

Mr. Roth said hunting season open this week and asked for a sign to be posted on the parking lot kiosk at the Housenick park so visitors are aware. Mr. Roth asked when the budget hearings will take place. Mr. Bruce said the meetings will be held on Thursday, October 23rd, Tuesday, October 28th and Thursday, November 6th from 6 pm to 8pm.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously voice vote to approve the September 15, 2025 regular public meeting minutes as presented.

PRESENTATIONS

**TOWNSHIP
ROADWAY
IMPROVEMENTS -
PRELIMINARY SCOPE
ANALYSES**

Ron Gawlik, Township Engineer said the board asked him to investigate several road improvement projects that could be paid for by Act 209 traffic-impact fees. The township has approximately \$3.4 million in these fees available. Mr. Gawlik presented his findings on the following potential projects:

1. Farmersville Road north of Green Pond Road;

Realign to vacate the flooding area. Extensive permitting involved as the wetlands and stormwater areas have no where to drain. Estimated cost \$2-\$3 million dollars. Mr. Merhottein asked if the land belonged to Jaindl. Mr. Gawlik said yes. Mr. Merhottein asked if there was an estimate for the purchase of the property. Mr. Hudak said he wondered the same. Mr. Gawlik said he didn't have an estimate.

ROBERT GAUTHIER
**4215 FARMERSVILLE
RD.**

Mr. Gauthier asked if something could be built over the existing roadway. Mr. Gawlik said a bridge would be very expensive.

2. Santee Road (Clifton Avenue to Chester Avenue);

Mr. Gawlik said the police department raised concerns about this road segment. The concern was pedestrian accessibility primarily for students. Portions of the area have sidewalk and this would involve filling in the spaces. The improvements continue to the Clifton intersection and no farther because of a potential stormwater project. The scope of that project is unknown. Mr. Gawlik said the township has requested PennDOT funding for this improvement. Mr. Hudak asked how far down the sidewalk should go. Mr. Gawlik said it goes down to Clifton Avenue.

GARY YODER
3116 CHESTER AVE.

Mr. Yoder said this is a great idea as the road itself is narrow. He asked if there was a time line. Mr. Gawlik said the schedule depends on the board's decision and grant funding. Mr. Yoder said his neighbors would approve of this project.

3. Christian Spring Road (Rt. 191 to Rt. 22); and

Mr. Gawlik said the police department and public works believe the road is narrow and experiences heavy pass-through traffic. The project would involve substantial permitting, utility relocations and accessing right of way. The project does not include the intersections with Brodhead Road or Route 191. The estimate for this project is \$3.5 - \$4 million. An alternate plan would be to put in a new road surface and not do further improvements. The estimate for the alternate scope of work is \$140,000. Mr. Merhottein said he didn't think the road needed sidewalks on both sides of the road. Mr. Gawlik said the reason it was include was the proximity to the park and the residents. Mr. Hudak said he would support sidewalks on one side of the road. Mr. Gallagher said he would like to see the road turned into a one-way in either direction.

Mr. Roth said there are a number of people who walk from the hotel on that road and a sidewalk is needed for safety.

4. Church Road (Easton Avenue to Country Club Road).

Mr. Gawlik said public works has this road on their list for paving. This would require a full reconstruction of the road - about a mile long. The Traditions of America and proposed Mill Creek developments have frontage. Phase 2 of the project proposes modest modifications to the entrance to help with the access to and from Church Road onto William Penn Highway. The cost of this project is estimated at \$2.2 - \$2.6 million.

Mr. Merhottein asked if Mill Creek would be responsible for its frontage. Mr. Gawlik said yes and their plan doesn't include widening. Mr. Gallagher asked if Mill Creek would be responsible for paving the road. Mr. Gawlik said he would need to research further to determine what extent of the road they are responsible for.

Mr. Bruce said the Traffic Impact Fee Fund has \$3.5 million available. The Farmersville Road and Church Road projects are in the current Act 209 area; the other two proposed projects are not and would have to be added, he said.

STORMWATER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Bruce Hulshizer, of township stormwater engineering firm HRG, said the Easton Avenue Phase 1 flood mitigation project includes improvements to basins in the City of Bethlehem and Bethlehem Township. A \$3 million FEMA grant was secured for this phase, but the grant is now in limbo due to federal government changes. Mr. Hulshizer said the project is part of the township's MS4 requirements, in addition to its flood mitigation aspect. As such, HRG has proposed splitting Easton Avenue Phase 1 into two separate phases; Phase 1A would address the city basins and Phase 2A would address the township basins. Without the FEMA grant at this time, Mr. Hulshizer said additional funding would be sought through a state PENNVEST loan. Mr. Gallagher asked if the city was aware. Mr. Hulshizer said yes and the agreement between the two municipalities would have to be amended. Mr. Merhottein asked how much will it help the area by Keystone. Mr. Hulshizer said it will help for the smaller storms. The basins would be widened to hold more water.

Mr. Merhottein said he doesn't want to put future boards in a position to increase stormwater fees. Mr. Deckman said he doesn't want to risk losing the MS4 permit. Mr. Hulshizer said it's a five-year permit and was renewed last year.

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to update stormwater capital improvement plan by splitting the first phase of the Easton Avenue/Santee Road flood mitigation project into two phases (Phases 1A and 1B).

SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A HOLD HARMLESS INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP AND G. STEPHEN FOGT REGARDING INSTALLATION OF A FENCE IN A TOWNSHIP DRAINAGE AND UTILITY EASEMENT AT 3399 DARIEN ROAD

Upon motion (Lawrence-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing and approving a hold harmless indemnification agreement

between Bethlehem Township and G. Stephen Fogt regarding installation of a fence in a township drainage and utility easement at 3399 Darien Road.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING IMPROVEMENTS SECURITY RELEASE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$492,926.91 FOR HECKTOWN ROAD BUSINESS PARK

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving Improvements Security Release in the amount of \$492,926.91 for Hecktown Road Business Park.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING AN OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) AGREEMENT FOR AN ON-LOT STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION OF A SINGLE-FAMILY HOME AT 3580 MANOR ROAD

Upon motion (Deckman-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving an operation and maintenance (O&M) agreement for an on-lot stormwater management system to support construction of a single-family home at 3580 Manor Road.

RESOLUTION R061-25

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE BOROUGH OF FREEMANSBURG AND 1600 FREEMANSBURG ASSOCIATES LLC

Upon motion (Hudak-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R061-25 authorizing the first amendment to Intermunicipal Cooperation Agreement with the Borough of Freemansburg and 1600 Freemansburg Associates LLC.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING AMENDMENT #1 OF THE INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT WITH FREEMANSBURG BOROUGH TO CODIFY THE TOWNSHIP ADMINISTERING THE PERMITTING AND INSPECTION PROCESS FOR 1600 FREEMANSBURG AVENUE (AKA – FREEMANSBURG INDUSTRIAL)

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote approving Amendment #1 of the intermunicipal agreement with Freemansburg Borough to codify the township administering the permitting and inspection process for 1600 Freemansburg Avenue (AKA – Freemansburg Industrial). Mr. Gallagher opposed.

**RESOLUTIONS OF
THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

RESOLUTION R058-25

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATIONS TO THE LOCAL SHARE ACCOUNT (NORTHAMPTON/LEHIGH COUNTIES & MONROE COUNTY) GRANT PROGRAM OF THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY

Mr. Bruce said this resolution was approved at the last board meeting, but was up for a vote again because of a typographical error in the cost of one of the projects.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R058-25 authorizing applications to the Local

Share Account (Northampton/Lehigh Counties & Monroe County) Grant Program of the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20251958 – NANCY RUN FIRE CO. RELIEF ASSOC. – FINANCE – \$116,401.18
PO 20251959 – BETH. TWP. VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. RELIEF ASSOC. – FINANCE – \$116,401.18
PO 20251962 – NAZARETH FORD INC. – PUBLIC WORKS – \$2,898.99
PO 20251977 – PENN POWER GROUP LLC – PPIS – \$9,505.00
PO 20252032 – MIDWEST BIOMEDICAL RESOURCES INC. – FINANCE – \$17,500.00
PO 20252037 – LIFE FITNESS – BTCC – \$26,703.40
PO 20252038 – BETH. TWP. VOL. FIRE CO. – FINANCE – \$24,529.85
PO 20252041 – FLYMOTION, LLC – POLICE – \$81,002.69
PO 20252042 – FLYMOTION, LLC – POLICE – \$14,364.00
PO 20252043 – INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS – POLICE – \$14,447.00
PO 20252045 – CODY SYSTEMS – PPIS – \$87,847.00

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

DISCUSSION ITEM

PROPOSED CROSSWALK TO D&L TRAIL

Mr. Hudak said the problem is that pull into the parking lot and instead of walking down to the corner they ride their bike or they walk across the center island and straight into the road, with cars coming from both directions. Mr. Hudak said it's a safety issue and he would like signage and a crosswalk to direct the people from the parking lot to the trail. Mr. Gawlik said he would need direction from the board to work with public works and get a cost estimate. Mr. Deckman agreed that it made sense since it's a township parking lot.

By consensus, the board directed the township engineer to provide a cost estimate for the proposed crosswalk.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Mr. Bruce announced that tomorrow is National Night Out at the municipal park from 4 pm to 7 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary