

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT	John Merhottein, President John Gallagher, Vice President Matthew Deckman, Commissioner DeAnn Lawrence, Commissioner
MEMBERS ABSENT	Michael Hudak, Commissioner
OTHERS PRESENT	Anthony Giovannini, Township Solicitor Doug Bruce, Township Manager Andrew Freda, Finance Director Felix Martinez, Jr., Assistant Finance Director Ronald J. Gawlik, Township Engineer
CALL TO ORDER	Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.
EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT	Solicitor Giovannini said the Board of Commissioners met tonight in executive session from 6:30 p.m. to approximately 7:00 p.m. to discuss personnel matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.
COURTESY OF THE FLOOR	There were no comments during courtesy of the floor.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the following meeting minutes as amended. Mr. Hudak was absent. Regular Public Meeting – November 3, 2025 Budget Hearing Meeting – October 23, 2025 Budget Hearing Meeting – October 28, 2025 Budget Hearing Meeting – November 6, 2025
FIRST READING OF THE PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET	Mr. Freda went over the budget, line by line and fund by fund. He said the general-purpose tax remained fixed on 7.59 mills. The Fire Tax will increase by 0.125 mills, from 0.45 to 0.575 mills. A resolution regarding the additional types of spending for this fund will be presented to the board at the December 15, 2025 meeting.
GLENN KRIER 3942 KENRICK DR.	Mr. Krier asked if the State passed a tax on electric vehicles. Mr. Freda said he hasn't seen anything yet. Mr. Merhottein said that legislation has not been passed. There were no other major changes to the proposed budget. Mr. Freda said the budget ordinance will be advertise and made available for a 30-day inspection. The final approval of the budget is scheduled for December 15, 2025. All budget documents are available online. The board thanked Mr. Freda and Mr. Martinez for their efforts.

Upon motion (Deckman-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to advertise the 2026 budget ordinance. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**SUBDIVISIONS AND
LAND
DEVELOPMENT

MOTION**

**A MOTION TO EXTEND THE DEVELOPER’S OBLIGATION TO
COMPLETE IMPROVEMENTS, PURSUANT TO THE LAND
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT, TO NOVEMBER 17, 2026 FOR MNB
PROPERTIES LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Mr. Merhottein said this is a standard extension request from the developer.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to extend the developer’s obligation to complete improvements, pursuant to the land development agreement, to November 17, 2026 for MNB Properties Land Development Plan. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**RESOLUTIONS OF
THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATIONS TO THE LOCAL
SHARE ASSESSMENT (STATEWIDE) GRANT PROGRAM OF THE
COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY**

RESOLUTION R058-24

Mr. Merhottein said this is an application to the annual statewide gaming grant. Mr. Bruce said the program is accepting multiple applications and the state needs the items requested be accurately noted. Township will be submitting three applications requesting a total of \$339,423.79 for the following three purchases/projects:

- \$148,889.51 for two mobile radios and seven portable radios for the Nancy Run Fire Company;
- \$21,723.66 for nine mobile computers for the Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company;
- \$168,810.62 for purchase and outfitting of two police vehicles for the Bethlehem Township Police Department.

All of these purchases are in the proposed 2026 capital budget.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing applications to the Local Share Assessment (Statewide) grant program of the Commonwealth Financing Authority. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**MOTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

MOTION**

**A MOTION APPROVING THE 2026 PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE
AND AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO ADVERTISE THE
SCHEDULE**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the board of commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the 2026 public meeting schedule and authorize the township manager to advertise the schedule. Mr. Hudak was absent.

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A RIGHT-OF-WAY GRANT AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP AND PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES CORPORATION. (TABLED)

MOTION

Mr. Gawlik said there was no additional information provided since the last meeting. The item remained tabled.

**BILL AGENDA OF
NOVEMBER 12, 2025**

Mr. Gallagher said the line item column on the bill agenda had changed and no longer included helpful information. Mr. Bruce said he would check on that.

Upon motion (Lawrence- Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of November 12, 2025. Mr. Hudak was absent.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20252272 – WIND RIVER ENVIRON. LLC – PPIS - \$7,145.75

PO 20252278 – HORWITH TRUCKS INC. – PPIS – \$6,731.42

PO 20252332 – DBM CONSULTING LLC – \$3,900.00

PO 20252353 – BERGEY’S INC. – PW – \$5,704.22

PO 20252355 – GROFF TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT – PW – \$3,979.66

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

**TREASURER’S
REPORT OF
OCTOBER 31, 2025**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer’s report of October 31, 2025, subject to audit. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**ZONING HEARING
BOARD MEETING
OF NOVEMBER 19,
2025**

The following item is on the agenda.

APPEAL #19-2025 OF MELISSA ASHBURNER AND MITCHELL

KOWALSKI - the applicant seeks relief concerning real estate located at 2406 9th Street, Bethlehem Township, Northampton County. The applicant is seeking to construct an addition to the existing single-family dwelling in order to accommodate for single floor living. The relief requested is a dimensional variance from Bethlehem Township Zoning Ordinance Section 275-49.G(1), which requires a minimum rear yard setback for a principal structure of 35 feet. The applicant requests a 27-foot rear yard setback, thereby seeking a variance of 8 feet.

Upon motion (Deckman-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to send the township solicitor to the Zoning Hearing Board meeting to advise staff as necessary. Mr. Hudak was absent.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Mr. Gallagher requested the status of all the complaints and violations noted in the Community Development report. Mr. Merhottein said he will give staff more time.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

**7TH STREET AND
DEWALT STREET -
ALL-WAY STOP**

Mr. Gawlik said they reviewed the intersection and found that it met the warrants for an all-way stop sign. Mr. Merhottein asked if this needs to go before PennDOT. Mr. Gawlik said it was not a state road. By consensus, the board agreed to place this matter on a future agenda to move forward.

**CONTROL
EVALUATION
WILSON AVENUE
CROSSWALK**

Mr. Gawlik said Mr. Kanaskie said the cost for the installation of a crosswalk and signage on Wilson Avenue was approximately \$3,000. By consensus, the board agreed to move forward with the project.

COMMENTS

Mr. Merhottein said the Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company recently had a food drive and thanked them for their efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary