

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
MAY 18, 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 Anthony Giovannini, Jr., Township Solicitor
Edward D. Hozza, Jr., 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT Solicitor Giovannini said the Board of Commissioners met on May 18, 2026 at 6:00 pm to approximately 6:35 pm to discuss litigation matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

RESIDENT LOWER NAZARETH TOWNSHIP The resident asked for a status on the sewer line installation proposal in Lower Nazareth Township. Mr. Merhottein said an official application was not submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Upon motion (Lawrence-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the May 4, 2026, regular public meeting minutes as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING

ORDINANCE 05-26 **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 131, "FIRE PREVENTION " OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM'S CODE OF CODIFIED ORDINANCES, SECTION 131-1 DEFINITIONS, OF THE ADOPTED 2018 EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH**

Ms. Smith explained this ordinance amends the definition of "fire code official" so they can be more involved.

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to adopt Ordinance 05-26 amending chapter 131, "Fire Prevention " of the township of Bethlehem's Code of Codified Ordinances, Section 131-1 Definitions, of the adopted 2018 Edition of the International Fire Code, and repealing all ordinances inconsistent herewith.

SUBDIVISIONS & LAND DEVELOPMENT

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING IMPROVEMENTS SECURITY RELEASE CERTIFICATION NO. 3 (FINAL) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$11,000.00 FOR FALMER DRIVE APARTMENTS LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Merhottein said this closes out their security release.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving Improvements Security Release Certification No. 3 (FINAL) in the amount of \$11,000.00 for Falmer Drive Apartments Land Development Plan.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R044-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO UTILIZE MUNICIBID ON-LINE GOVERNMENT AUCTION SERVICE FOR THE SALE OF TOWNSHIP-OWNED PERSONAL PROPERTY

Mr. Merhottein said this resolution is for the sale of the oldest police patrol car.

Upon motion (Deckman-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R044-26 authorizing the township manager to utilize Municibid on-line government auction service for the sale of township-owned personal property.

MOTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A STREET LIGHTING AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP AND FIRSTENERGY PENNSYLVANIA ELECTRIC COMPANY

They will be replacing halogen lights with led lighting with no cost associated with this work.

**GLENN KRIER
3942 KENRICK DR.**

Mr. Krier asked if a light can be installed at the corner of Easton Avenue and Washington Street. Mr. Merhottein said they could look into it. Solicitor Giovannini reminded the board that this agreement was solely for the installation of LED lights.

**STEVE HUNT
2197 COOK DR.**

Mr. Hunt said he would like to lights adjusted pointing downwards.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing and approving a Street Lighting Agreement between Bethlehem Township and FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company.

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CERTAIN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM AND EDWARD D. HOZZA, JR. FOR THE POSITION OF TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Upon motion (Deckman-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing the execution of a certain employment agreement between the

Township of Bethlehem and Edward D. Hozza, Jr. for the position of township manager.

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A \$2,000.00 STIPEND TO CHIEF GREGORY J. GOTTSCHALL FOR HIS INTERIM MANAGER ROLE

The board thanked the Chief for stepping up as interim manager.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing and approving a \$2,000.00 stipend to Chief Gregory J. Gottschall for his interim manager role.

BILL AGENDA OF MAY 13, 2026

Upon motion (Deckman-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of May 13, 2026.

PURCHASE ORDERS

PO 20260996 – STEPHENSON EQUIPMENT, INC. – PW – \$3,233.46
PO 20261030 – SKY ZONE EASTON – BTCC – \$2,399.00
PO 20261063 – AFFORDABLE COMFORT CONTRACTING, INC. – PPIS – \$11,524.00
PO 20261064 – A-1 TRAFFIC CONTROL, LLC – PW – \$16,582.07

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

TREASURER’S REPORT OF APRIL 30, 2026

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer’s report of April 30, 2026, subject to audit.

ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING OF MAY 27, 2026

Ms. Smith said the following three items were on the agenda and requested the solicitor attend for advisement and not opposition:

- **10-2026 – Bruno D. Scipioni, Sr. & Rachel Scipioni / 3157 Santee Road** – Dimensional variance to allow for a buildable area of 6,604 square feet per townhouse dwelling unit. Zoning Ordinance requires an average minimum of 9,000 square feet of buildable area. Applicant is proposing to develop subject property into a 14-unit townhouse development.
- **12-2026 – St. Luke’s Health Network Inc. & TSV-HPIII Lehigh Valley, LLC / 3311 Farmersville Road (MOB)** – Seeking variance for number of wall signs, areas of wall signs, number of freestanding signs, areas of freestanding signs, and to be permitted to have an electronic changing message sign which is a type of sign that is prohibited in all districts.
- **13-2026 – Keystone Novelties Distributors LLC / 3811-3859 Nazareth Pike** – Seeking special exception use to construct a temporary tent for the purposes of fireworks sales in the parking lot of the subject property. Also, seeking a variance to be permitted to erect the tent for a 14-day period annually

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote directing the township solicitor to attend the meeting to advise staff.

MONTHLY REPORTS

All monthly reports were accepted.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

STOP SIGN AT 6TH & KLEIN STREET

Mr. Deckman requested a traffic study for the installation of stop signs at the intersections of 7th and Dewalt Streets and 6th and Klein Streets. Mr. Hudak said he supported the request. Mr. Gawlik reached out to a data collection agency and was quoted \$1,100 for a 12-hour count at 7th and Dewalt Streets, which is the standard amount of time. He said the agency could do it before the end of school. Mr. Deckman said there was a house with 50-foot high bamboo which obstructs some of the sight at the intersection. Ms. Smith said her department was currently working on the bamboo violation.

ADJOURNMENT

By consensus, the board directed staff to proceed with the traffic count to determine if the stop signs at 6th & Klein streets are warranted.

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary