

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
APRIL 20, 2026**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT Michael D. Hudak, 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT Solicitor Broughal said the Board of Commissioners met on April 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm discuss contract negotiations matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

**BRIAN HILLARD
3901 PEACOCK DR.** Mr. Hillard said he would like to do a solar feasibility study, at no cost to the township, with homeowners. He presented the board with a draft memorandum of understanding.

**RAYMOND HAYES
1745 CHARLEY LN.** Mr. Hayes is concerned that Kay Builders, in installing an irrigation system, will empty the detention pond with stagnant water in their yards. He asked what the township could do to ensure there won't be a health risk. Mr. Gawlik said he will speak with the developer about dewatering it. Mr. Deckman asked that the developer speak with the township engineer before proceeding.

**GLENN KRIER
3942 KENRICK DR.** Mr. Kreier asked if St. Luke's has a specific township frame to install the welcome sign. Ms. Smith said they don't have a specific time frame.

**TOM KEEFER
3803 CARTER RD.** Mr. Keefer believes contractors get quick approvals and homeowners are just pushed to the wayside. Mr. Merhottein said he helps many residents.

**RESIDENT (VIA ZOOM)
CHARLEY LN.** The resident also expressed concerns about the stagnant water in the detention pond at River Hill Estates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the April 6, 2026, regular public meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**SUBDIVISIONS &
LAND
DEVELOPMENT**

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING THE 3311 FARMERSVILLE ROAD MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING (MOB) EXTENSION REQUEST

Ms. Smith said the applicant is requesting a time extension to August 30, 2026. Mr. Gallagher asked if the retaining wall was part of the project. Mr. Deckman asked if this was their first extension. Ms. Smith said this would be the second extension. Mr. Deckman asked what would happen if they deny the request. Solicitor Broughal said it would not be prudent as the township might then have to pull the developer's letter of credit and complete any unfinished work.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving the 3311 Farmersville Road Medical Office Building (MOB) Extension Request to August 30, 2026. Mr. Hudak was absent.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING THE 3311 FARMERSVILLE ROAD MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING (MOB) RETAINING WALL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Mr. Merhottein said the distance from the retaining wall was incorrectly installed as the distance from it to the right-of-way line was approximately nine inches. The required set back from the right-of-way line is five feet. Steve Boell, attorney for the applicant, said only a portion of it was installed incorrectly. Mr. Gallagher said it was not a minor mistake and it impacts the streetscape overlay. Mr. Boell said the streetscape overlay is only applicable to the Easton Avenue portion.

Ms. Smith explained that the developer requested and was denied zoning relief from the Zoning Hearing Board and that decision was appealed to Northampton County court, where further action is pending. Ms. Smith said Mr. Hudak wanted to go on record saying that he would like the board to consider a financial penalty. She said staff is working with them and no landscaping was lost, just relocated. Mr. Deckman said it appears to be a construction error. Mr. Merhottein asked how much it would cost to replace the wall. Developer Joseph Bennett said it would cost approximately \$400,000. He said the surveyor made the mistake. The sidewalks weren't affected, only the green areas. The applicant offered to add more trees to make it more aesthetically pleasing.

**BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth said they were told to stop building but continued. He said the Zoning Hearing Board has yet to be informed of the appeal. The attorney for the applicant said the Zoning Hearing Board was given a copy of the settlement agreement.

**GLENN KRIER
3942 KENRICK DR.**

Mr. Krier said the wall should be redone and the surveyor fired.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to table the 3311 Farmersville Road Medical Office Building (MOB) Retaining Wall Settlement Agreement. The motion carried 3-1. Mr. Gallagher opposed. Mr. Hudak was absent.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING THE 2640 WILLOW PARK ROAD SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The attorney for the applicant requested to table this motion.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote table the 2640 Willow Park Road Settlement Agreement. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**RESOLUTIONS OF
THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

RESOLUTION R037-26 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ATTENDANCE OF SERGEANT JEREMY ANDERSON AND CORPORAL KEVIN LINDSAY AT THE FBI-LEEDA (FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION) SUPERVISOR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE TRAINING ON MAY 18 – 22, 2026 IN SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY

Mr. Merhottein said this is a standard police training resolution.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R037-26 authorizing the attendance of Sergeant Jeremy Anderson and Corporal Kevin Lindsay at the FBI-LEEDA (FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association) Supervisor Leadership Institute training on May 18 – 22, 2026 in Secaucus, New Jersey. Mr. Hudak was absent.

RESOLUTION R038-26 A RESOLUTION AWARDDING THE CONTRACT FOR THE FREEMANSBURG AVENUE & 9TH STREET EMERGENCY SIGNAL PROJECT

Mr. Merhottein said this project is for the installation of an emergency pre-emption traffic signal allowing Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company vehicles safer access to Freemansburg Avenue in emergency situations.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R038-26 awarding the contract for the Freemansburg Avenue & 9th Street Emergency Signal project to Grace Industries, Inc. in the amount of \$400,168.25. Mr. Hudak was absent.

RESOLUTION R039-26 A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP FEE SCHEDULE FOR CERTAIN FEELS CHARGED BY THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2026

Mr. Merhottein said the police chief is requesting fee increases.

Upon motion (Deckman-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R039-26 amending the Bethlehem Township fee schedule for certain feels charged by the Bethlehem Township Police Department for the Calendar Year 2026 as presented. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**MOTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND DESIGNATING COMMUNITY DAYS AS A “PUBLIC CELEBRATION”

Mr. Merhottein said this was a standard motion which waives the noise ordinance for the fireworks and the requirement for the fire company to send certified letters to nearby residents.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote designating Community Days as a “public celebration”. Mr. Hudak was absent.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY’S APPLICATION TO THE PENNSYLVANIA LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD FOR A SPECIAL OCCASION PERMIT FOR THE COMMUNITY DAYS FESTIVAL

Mr. Merhottein said the letter memorializes the board’s support of the Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company receiving a special occasion license for Community Days.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote approving the Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company’s application to the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board for a Special Occasion Permit for the Community Days Festival. Mr. Hudak was absent.

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING A RADIO USE AGREEMENT FOR THE NANCY RUN FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR GRANT REIMBURSEMENT

Mr. Merhottein said this agreement is required by the state Department of Community & Economic Development for reimbursement of a grant to purchase firefighter radios.

Upon motion (Lawrence - Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing a Radio Use Agreement for the Nancy Run Fire Department for grant reimbursement. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**BILL AGENDA OF
APRIL 15, 2026**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of April 15, 2026. Mr. Hudak was absent.

PURCHASE ORDERS

- PO 20260757 – MOYER INDOOR/OUTDOOR – PW – \$8,448.00**
- PO 20260760 – BIOMEDIX MEDICAL INC. – FINANCE – \$19,530.00**
- PO 20260784 – SENSUS METERING SYSTEMS – PPIS – \$4,699.00**
- PO 20260800 – EARTHSPIRITS.NET, INC. – BTPD – \$2,528.99**
- PO 20260801 – SIGNAL SERVICE, INC. – BTPD – \$2,362.50**
- PO 20260802 – CHAPMAN AUTO GROUP – BTPD – \$49,511.00**
- PO 20260803 – ELITE VEHICLE SOLUTIONS – BTPD – \$27,189.53**
- PO 20260804 – BRITE – BTPD – \$3,556.00**
- PO 20260805 – MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS – BTPD – \$6,633.50**
- PO 20260838 – WITMER PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP, INC. – BTPD – \$33,289.49**
- PO 20260848 – GROFF TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT – PW – \$8,589.29**
- PO 20260849 – DALE KOEHLER & SONS FARM, LLC – PW – \$9,225.00**
- PO 20260851 – LIFE FITNESS – BTCC – \$12,542.37**
- PO 20260852 – PORTNOFF LAW ASSOCIATES LTD. – FINANCE – \$33,514.62**
- PO 20260853 – PORTNOFF LAW ASSOCIATES LTD. – FINANCE – \$12,675.18**

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

**TREASURER’S
REPORT OF
MARCH 31, 2026**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer’s report of March 31, 2026, subject to audit. Mr. Hudak was absent.

**ZONING HEARING
BOARD MEETING
OF APRIL 29, 2026**

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

Appeal 08-2026 – Domingo A. Jimenez and Medilda E. Vargas / 4358 Rexford Drive – Dimensional variance request to construct a pavilion on an existing patio.

Appeal 09-2026 – Benjamin T. Flanagan / 2815 Jefferson Street – Dimension variance request for greater than 7% slope in the first 20 feet of the driveway.

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

MONTHLY REPORTS All monthly reports were accepted.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

SIGNS ON TOWNSHIP PROPERTY ALONG THE D&L TRAIL Mr. Merhottein said the September 11 National Trail Alliance would like to put signs up along the D&L Trail. Mr. Gallagher asked how much it would cost the township. Mr. Merhottein said there would be no cost to the township. Solicitor Broughal recommended the board draft a policy for future events. Mr. Deckman asked how many signs would be placed on township property. Mr. Merhottein said two and added that he supports drafting a policy.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to allow the September 11th National Memorial Trail Alliance to place directional signs along the D&L trail. Mr. Hudak was absent.

COMMENT Mr. Merhottein and the board thanked Mr. Bruce for his 23 years with the township and wished him well.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary