

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
JULY 21, 2025**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	John Merhottein, President John Gallagher, Vice President Matthew Deckman, Commissioner Michael Hudak, Commissioner DeAnn Lawrence, Commissioner
<b>OTHERS PRESENT</b>	James L. Broughal, Township Solicitor Doug Bruce, Township Manager Samantha Smith, Community Development Director Ron Gawlik, Township Engineer
<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.
<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT</b>	Solicitor Broughal said the Board of Commissioners met in executive session after the regular public meeting on July 7, 2025 for about ten minutes to discuss potential litigation matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.
<b>COURTESY OF THE FLOOR</b>	
<b>BARRY ROTH 4323 CHETWIN TERR.</b>	Mr. Roth asked for the number of police light bars at the public works garage. Mr. Bruce said he will get that information. Mr. Roth said the township vehicle at the community center needs to have the township seal on. He recalled there was a resolution requiring township vehicles have the seal on them back when Commissioner Hudak's father was on the board.
<b>DAVID BUCHERER 4220 NICHOLAS ST.</b>	Mr. Bucherer said he went through the public works and PPIS contracts and found that certain benefits were unsustainable. He would like this fixed and offered to be of service the next time contracts are negotiated.
<b>STEVEN HUNT 2197 COOK DR.</b>	Mr. Hunt said there are problems with several curbs and sidewalk buckling and wanted to know who was responsible to repair them. He was told they don't belong to the township.
<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b>	Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the July 7, 2025, regular public meeting minutes as presented.
<b>CONDITIONAL USE HEARING DECISION</b>	<b>MOTION TO APPROVE THE CHRIN V-7 GARDEN APARTMENT CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION WITH CONDITIONS</b>
<b>HANNA BLACK 3235 GEORGIAN LN.</b>	Ms. Black wanted to present the board with comments on the project. Solicitor Broughal informed her that comments were permitted at the hearing which took place at the last meeting. Her comments today would not be part of the record for reconsideration.  Upon motion (Hudak-Merhottein), the Board of Commissioners voted by roll call vote to approve the Chrin V-7 garden apartment Conditional Use Permit Application with the following conditions:

07-21-2025

1. Confirm continued functionality of signal timings at the intersections studied in the transportation impact assessment prepared by bowman last revised march 2025, via a post-construction traffic study prepared using new count data collected following issuance of a certificate of occupancy amounting to 90% occupancy of the apartment units. any signal timing improvements shall be made within 6 months of completion of the study.
2. No vehicular access will be permitted to William Penn Highway, other than emergency access.
3. Unless there are unknown impediments, extend curb and sidewalk along hope road south, across township property driveway, for continuity to the existing curb and sidewalk and provide applicable ADA curb ramps as required by PennDOT.
4. Provided that the installation can be completed within the PennDOT right-of-way, extend sidewalk along William Penn Highway west to the crosswalk at the route 33 northbound off-ramp.
5. improve all four corners of the intersection of William Penn Highway and hope road to meet current PennDOT standards relating to pedestrian accommodations, if the board of commissioners agree to use eminent domain to obtain right-of-way from the involved property owners.
6. access to hope road to be as shown on bowman concept plan submitted to PennDOT, including a right-in / right-out only on the northern driveway with a triangular channelizing island in the driveway and a median island on hope road, to the extent permitted by PennDOT.
7. if construction is proposed in phases, such that buildings will get certificates of occupancy at different times, a phasing plan must be submitted and approved by the township.
8. provide a luminaire at the intersection of William Penn Highway and Hope Road as part of the replacement signal mast arm on the southwest corner.

The motion carried 4 to 1. Mr. Deckman opposed.

## **SUBDIVISIONS & LAND DEVELOPMENT**

### **MOTION**

### **A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A HOLD HARMLESS INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP, TYLER MATTHEWS, AND NICOLE MATTHEWS REGARDING INSTALLATION OF A FENCE IN A TOWNSHIP EASEMENT AT 1702 JOSIE LANE**

Mr. Merhottein said this was a standard request for fence installation within a stormwater easement reviewed by staff and recommended approval.

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to authorize and approve a hold harmless indemnification agreement between Bethlehem Township, Tyler Matthews, and Nicole Matthews regarding installation of a fence in a township easement at 1702 Josie Lane

**MOTION**

**A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A HOLD HARMLESS INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP, ERNEST MACHABA, AND THEMBEKA MACHABA REGARDING INSTALLATION OF A FENCE IN A TOWNSHIP EASEMENT AT 3895 WHITE BARN LANE**

Mr. Merhottein said this was a standard request for fence installation within a stormwater easement reviewed by staff and recommended approval.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to authorize and approve a hold harmless indemnification agreement between Bethlehem Township, Ernest Machaba, and Thembeke Machaba regarding installation of a fence in a township easement at 3895 White Barn Lane

**MOTION**

**A MOTION APPROVING IMPROVEMENTS SECURITY RELEASE CERTIFICATION NO. 1, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$206,262.31 FOR MCDONALD'S, ROUTE 191**

Mr. Merhottein said this security release was reviewed by staff and recommended for approval.

Upon motion (Lawrence-Hudak), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Improvements Security Release Certification No. 1, in the amount of \$206,262.31 for McDonald's, Route 191.

**MOTION**

**A MOTION APPROVING IMPROVEMENTS SECURITY RELEASE CERTIFICATION NO. 13, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$65,716.91 FOR RIVER HILL ESTATES**

Mr. Merhottein said this security release was reviewed by staff and recommended for approval.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve Improvements Security Release Certification No. 13, in the amount of \$65,716.91 for River Hill Estates. The motion carried 4 to 1. Mr. Deckman opposed.

**RESOLUTIONS OF  
THE BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION R048-25**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING INVESTIGATOR GRETCHEN KRAEMER AND OFFICER SARAH ZIELINSKI TO ATTEND PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE ON-SCENE COLLISION INVESTIGATION TRAINING AUGUST 4-8 AND 11-15, 2025, IN STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA**

Mr. Merhottein said this police training was a budgeted item.

Upon motion (Deckman-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R048-25 authorizing Investigator Gretchen Kraemer and Officer Sarah Zielinski to attend Pennsylvania State Police On-Scene Collision Investigation training August 4-8 and 11-15, 2025, in State College, Pennsylvania.

**MOTIONS OF THE  
BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

**MOTION**

**A MOTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR AN UPDATE TO THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote authorizing and approving a request for proposals (RFP) for an update to the Bethlehem Township Comprehensive Plan.

**MOTION**

**A MOTION APPOINTING A CHAIRPERSON OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

By consensus, the Board of Commissioners appointed Brian Hillard, Chairperson and Connor Newman, College Non-Voting Member of the Environmental Advisory Council.

**BILL AGENDA OF  
JULY 16, 2025**

Upon motion (Hudak-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of July 16, 2025.

**PURCHASE ORDERS**

**PO 20251408 – MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS – BTVFC – \$123,867.48**  
**PO 20251471 – METZ INC. – PPIS – \$17,590.00**  
**PO 20251472 – KELLY BROS – PPIS – \$2,602.00**  
**PO 20251473 – JWC ENVIRONMENTAL – PPIS – \$28,428.25**  
**PO 20251507 – EAST COST FLOOR DISTRIBUTION – PPIS – \$4,434.80**  
**PO 20251523 – SIGNAL SERVICE – BTPD – \$3,454.65**

**BARRY ROTH**

**4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth asked about purchase order 20251523, if it was reimbursable.

**DAVE BUCHERER**

**4220 NICHOLAS ST.**

Mr. Bucherer asked if the township was being reimbursed for the repairs to the traffic light. Mr. Merhottein said they will be reimbursed through the insurance.

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

**TREASURER'S  
REPORT OF  
JUNE 30, 2025**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer's report of June 30, 2025, subject to audit.

**ZONING HEARING  
BOARD MEETING OF  
JULY 30, 2025**

Ms. Smith said the following appeals are on the agenda:

Appeal 10-2025 – Bruno D. Scipioni, Sr & Rachel Scipioni / 3157 Santee Rd – Appeal of Zoning Officer's Notice of Violation issued on April 16, 2025. Appellant contends that the property is not operating as garden apartments and that applicant intends to occupy one of the units. Applicant seeks dimensional variance for paving setbacks from the right-of-way line for a collector or local street and a dimensional variance from all parking lot screening requirements. Ms. Smith said the appellant intends to withdraw the appeal for a garden apartment at the time of the meeting.

Appeal 13-2025 – Benjamin Wagner / 4111 Hummingbird Ln – Seeking dimensional variance to have a rear setback for a principal structure of 27.5 feet, thereby seeking relief of 7.5 feet. Applicant is looking to construct a deck that is greater than 4 feet in height which is required to meet principal building setbacks.

Upon motion (Hudak-Deckman), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote directing the solicitor to attend the meeting and oppose Appeal 10-2025.

**MONTHLY REPORTS**

Mr. Gallagher asked for the correct number for the police shift differential. Mr. Bruce said it was a glitch in the new payroll system and will be corrected by the end of this year. Mr. Gallagher thanked Ms. Smith for including the number current violations in her report. All monthly reports were accepted.

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**POTENTIAL  
ADJUSTMENT OF  
REAL ESTATE TAX  
CREDIT FOR  
VOLUNTEER  
FIREFIGHTERS**

Mr. Merhottein said it is more difficult each year to get volunteer fire fighters and as an incentive, would like to increase the adjustment of real estate tax credit from 20% to 100%. He believes this is a very good investment and appreciation for their sacrifice as first responders. Mr. Hudak asked what the requirements were to get this adjustment. Mr. Deckman said the required number of calls and training can be found in the report.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata  
Recording Secretary